

NEWSLINK

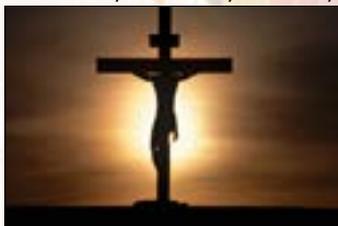
The Magazine of the Church of Ireland United Dioceses of Limerick, Killaloe & Ardfert

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The Empty Tomb - a fresco in Saint John's monastery, Tolleshunt Knights, Essex (photo: Patrick Comerford)



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Bishop Kenneth writes – Walking Through Lent

"Walking through Lent" – a phrase which encapsulates the way that Christians have seen Lent as a journey. Jesus who literally walked most of the time in his ministry gradually set his sights on Jerusalem, finally leading to the events we know as Holy Week – the arrival into the city on a donkey amidst cheering crowds, confrontation in the Temple, the Last Supper, betrayal, arrest and then crucifixion. All transformed on Easter Day.

Each year we too walk this journey with Jesus, letting the events speak for themselves, the greatest story ever told, unfolding before us; each year a little different, a new perspective, perhaps a new insight.

On Maundy Thursday, the Thursday of Holy Week, (13th April) we will celebrate the Chrism Eucharist, this year in St Mary's Church, Nenagh at 11.00 a.m. What has been a long tradition especially for clergy, has now become a service when we all recommit ourselves to service of God and neighbour through the administration of Holy Oil. In recent years this service has moved around the diocese, all are welcome to join in this special service. Clergy and Lay Readers are invited to robe if they wish.

LENT CHALLENGE

How are you faring with the Lent Challenge? Very many of you have taken it up, either individually or in groups. The practice of daily prayer and Bible reading is as old as the church itself and many still find it valuable today. If you wish to continue the practice after Lent the simplest way is to go onto the Church of Ireland website: www.ireland.anglican.org/prayer-worship/lectionary/daily-prayer to find an Order for Morning Prayer. If you click on the readings you will be brought to the daily readings.

GENERAL SYNOD IN LIMERICK

By now most of you will know that Limerick will be hosting the General Synod of the Church of Ireland from Thursday 4th to Saturday 6th May. General Synod has lay and clergy members elected from every diocese in Ireland who meet together with the Bishops for 3 days each year. General Synod first met in Dublin in 1870, though on that occasion the meetings lasted 31 days! This is the first time in its history that it has met in Limerick.

Diocesan Calendar

(for updates see Diocesan web site – www.limerick.anglican.org)

Wed 5th April, 8pm Mission Evening – Archdeacon Simon Lumby on Spiritual Tourism, Teach an Solas, Tralee

Wed 5th April, 7.30pm MU Diocesan Council, Moneygall Hall

Thu 6th April, 11.15am MU All-Ireland Holy Communion Service, Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin (hosted by Limerick & Killaloe)

Fri 7th – Sun 9th April UDYC South West Alive Junior Weekend, Muckross Youth Centre, Killarney (10+)

Sat 8th April, 8pm The Limerick Passion Play, with Polish Theatre in Limerick, Cantate Domino Choir, St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick (free, retiring collection)

Maundy Thursday 13th April, 11am Chrism Eucharist, St Mary's Church, Nenagh – All welcome

Fri 21st – Sun 23rd April UDYC Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend, Birr Outdoor Education Centre (2nd level upwards)

Thurs 4th May, 10am General Synod Eucharist, St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

Thurs 4th May – Sat 6th May General Synod, Limerick

Sun 21st May, 12 noon MU Pilgrims Way Festival Service, St Patrick's Church, Kenmare

Sat 27th May Slieve Bloom Hike for Christian Aid, start Clonaslee Community Centre, Co Laois

Fri 2nd – Mon 5th June Diocesan Confirmation Weekend, Esker Youth Village, Athenry

General Synod will begin with a choral Eucharist on Thursday morning 4th May at 10.00 a.m. in St Mary's Cathedral, at which the Primate will be the celebrant. The Guest of Honour will be the Mayor of Limerick, Councillor Kieran O'Hanlon. All in the diocese are invited to be present in the Cathedral for this special service – do please note the date in your diary now.



The Synod will conduct its business each day in The South Court Hotel in Limerick and visitors are welcome to come and sit in the visitors' section of Synod and see how the Synod reviews the life of the Church, and plans for the future.

Finally this year 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the nailing by Martin Luther of 95 theses on the door of his church in Wittenburg, Germany, often seen as the beginning of the Reformation. Search, the Church of Ireland Journal, is organising an academic seminar on the Reformation in Trinity College, Dublin on Saturday 22nd April next – 9.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Subscription €5 including lunch. Further details from our Diocesan Communications Officer Revd Michael Cavanagh at michael.cavanagh@eircom.net.

With all good wishes

+ Kenneth

The Rt. Revd. Kenneth Kearon

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Vacancy: Editor, Church of Ireland Gazette

An exciting opportunity has arisen for a new Editor of the Church of Ireland Gazette due to the current Editor stepping down from the post. The Gazette is a weekly publication founded in 1856 with a unique remit to appeal to people interested in matters to do not only with individual parishes, dioceses and the central Church of Ireland but also the worldwide church.

We welcome applications from ordained or lay people with a flair for journalism, good leadership skills, fully conversant with modern communication channels including social media, ideally with a proven track record, and with a fresh vision for a vibrant modern journal, designed to appeal to readers of all ages.

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Please send your application to The Chair of Church of Ireland Press Limited, 3 Wallace Avenue, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, BT27 4AA by 31st March 2017.

Notice of Diocesan Synod

In accordance with Standing Orders, please note that the Annual Ordinary Meeting of the Diocesan Synod of Limerick, Killaloe and Ardfert will be held in Villiers School, North Circular Road, Limerick on Saturday 24th June 2017.

Registration from 10am; Synod Eucharist at 4.00 p.m.

Yvonne Blennerhassett, Diocesan Secretary

Editorial

My wife Marty and I have just returned from a visit to India. We began by sightseeing in the Golden Triangle of Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. If you who have been watching Francis Brennan's Grand Tour on RTÉ you will have had a flavour of what we experienced - India really is an assault on all the senses: such exotic colours, sounds, tastes, smells! The Mughal era architecture is magnificent. The Taj Mahal is even more beautiful than I expected, with its symmetry and intricate decoration. But it is only one among many wonderful sights.

We also saw shocking poverty on city streets and in villages. But that is not the whole story - we also saw new high-rise urban districts, and vast infrastructure projects: motorways, elevated metros, and water pipelines. It is easy to believe that India is the world's fastest growing economy.

We moved on to Kolkata, or Calcutta as many still call it, to explore my family connections. The once grand capital of British India has a population of 4.5 million and is religiously diverse. Threequarters are Hindu, a fifth Muslim, Christians make up less than 1%. Many of the Muslims are recent arrivals - refugees and migrants from Bangladesh, the poorest of the poor - and they are resented by the Hindu majority.

In Calcutta I made a pilgrimage to the mother house of Mother Teresa - now Saint Teresa, since her canonisation last September. As I meditated in front of her tomb, sisters of her Missionaries of Charity order came to kneel at it in prayer for a few moments, before hurrying off to tend the sick and dying. They seemed undisturbed by the many tourists with their cameras. Alongside the tomb an area was furnished as a chapel. A sister told me a Mass in Bengali would start in a few minutes, which I stayed for. I understand no Bengali, but found I could follow the structure of the Eucharist quite easily, and respond under my breath in English at the appropriate points. I chose not to receive communion, but asked for a blessing, as is my custom in Roman Catholic churches, if not specifically invited.

What a joy to share so much with our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters, but how sad table fellowship remains problematic.

God Bless, Joc Sanders



Mother Teresa's flower-covered tomb (photo Joc Sanders)

Newslink

Newslink is the diocesan magazine for the United Diocese of Limerick, Killaloe Et Ardfert, which also includes the historic dioceses of Aghadoe, Clonfert, Emlly, Kilfenora and Kilmacduagh. For further information about the United Dioceses see the diocesan web site: www.limerick.anglican.org.

Newslink also covers Methodist Midlands and Southern District Circuits within the boundaries of the Church of Ireland Diocese.

Editor

In addition to news from parishes, schools and diocesan organisations, the Editor is delighted to receive articles and letters for publication, as well as suggestions as to how Newslink may be improved.

Please note: names and addresses of contributors must be given, and all letters printed will include name and address unless otherwise agreed with the Editor. All material dealing with parish/circuit matters must first be cleared with the Minister concerned.

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Deadlines

The next issue will be for May 2017, published for Sunday 7th May.

All material must reach the Editor by Friday 21st April 2017 before 6.00pm, by email only, unless otherwise agreed.

Late material cannot be guaranteed insertion.

NEWSLINK ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2017

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(contact: Peter Schutz, Ardhu, Castletroy, Co. Limerick,
Email: peterschuetz@gmail.com)

NEWSLINK ADVERTISING RATES FOR 2017

(UNCHANGED from 2016, full page is A4 portrait, half page A5 landscape etc)

	Rate per annum (Euro) (payable in advance)		Rate per single issue (Euro)	
	10 x Colour	10 x B&W	Colour	B&W
Full Page	1193	1069	154	143
Half Page	596	534	77	71
Quarter Page	299	268	39	36
Eighth Page	149	133	19	18

Prayer Corner

Partners in Prayer - April 2017

Each Sunday in April

Church of Ireland: The Diocese of Down & Dromore and Bishop Harold Miller.

Companion Dioceses: The five Dioceses of the Protestant Church of Anhalt, Germany.

2nd April, 5th Sunday in Lent, Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Mityana, Uganda and Rt Revd Stephen Kaziimba, Bishop of Mityana.

Diocese: For those undertaking a Lenten fast or other discipline, that God may strengthen their resolve.

9th April, 6th Sunday in Lent, Palm Sunday, Red or Violet

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Jerusalem and Rt Revd Suheil Dawani, Bishop of Jerusalem.

We pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

Diocese: For Rev Edna Wakely and Limerick City Parish at this time of vacancy, that the Holy Spirit may guide the choice of a new incumbent and Dean.

13th April, Maundy Thursday, Red or Violet (White for HC)

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Mount Kenya West, Kenya and Rt Revd Joseph Kagunda, Bishop of Mount Kenya West.

Diocese: For the ordained priests of our United Diocese, giving thanks for their ministry among us.

14th April, Good Friday

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Mpumalanga, South Africa and Rt Revd Daniel Kgomoosotho, Bishop of Mpumalanga.

Diocese: For ecumenical Good Friday walks of witness being held in our United Dioceses, that they may be Spirit filled.

16th April, Easter Day – 1st Sunday of Easter, White or Gold

*Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia!
our triumphant holy day, Alleluia!
who did once upon the cross, Alleluia!
suffer to redeem our loss. Alleluia!*

23rd April, 2nd Sunday of Easter, White

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Muranga South, Kenya and Rt Revd Julius Karanu Wa Gicheru, Bishop of Muranga South.

Diocese: For the continuing inter-diocesan conversations between our United Dioceses and the United Dioceses of Tuam, Killala & Achonry, that those concerned may discern the best way forward for the future.

30th April, 3rd Sunday of Easter, White

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Nandyal, South India and Rt Revd Eggoni Pushpalalitha, Bishop of Nandyal.

Diocese: For our diocesan representatives at General Synod, meeting in Limerick during the coming week.

7th May, 4th Sunday of Easter, White

Church of Ireland: The Diocese of Connor and Bishop Alan Abernethy.
Companion Dioceses: The five Dioceses of the Protestant Church of Anhalt, Germany.

Anglican Cycle of Prayer: The Diocese of Ndokwa, Bendel, Nigeria and Rt Revd David Obiosa, Bishop of Ndokwa.

Diocese: For the newly elected and appointed members of Select Vestries, giving thanks for the service of those who have ceased to be members.

A Prayer of St Augustine of Hippo

Eternal God,
the light of the minds that know you,
the joy of the hearts that love you,
and the strength of the wills that serve you:
grant us so to know you
that we may truly love you,
so to love you
that we may truly serve you,
whose service is perfect freedom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

(after Augustine of Hippo, 430AD)

Reflections by Brother Roger of Taizé

Like your disciples on the road to Emmaus, we are so often incapable of seeing that you, O Christ, are our companion on the way. But, when our eyes are opened, we realize that you were speaking to us, even though perhaps we had forgotten you. Then the sign of our trust in you is that, in our turn, we try to love, to forgive with you. Independent of our doubts or even our faith, O Christ, you are always there: your love burns in our heart of hearts.

*If you were not risen,
Lord Christ, to whom would we go
to discover a radiance
of the face of God?*

*If you were not risen,
we would not be together
seeking your communion.
We would not find in your presence
forgiveness,
wellspring of a new beginning.*

*If you were not risen,
where would we draw the energy
for following you
right to the end of our existence,
for choosing you again and anew?*



Easter Prayer

by Helen Steiner Rice

God, give us eyes to see the beauty of the Spring,
And to behold Your majesty in every living thing –
And may we see in lacy leaves and every budding flower
The Hand that rules the universe with gentleness and power –
And may this Easter grandeur that Spring lavishly imparts
Awaken faded flowers of faith lying dormant in our hearts,
And give us ears to hear, dear God, the Springtime song of birds
With messages more meaningful than man's often empty words
Telling harried human beings who are lost in dark despair –
'Be like us and do not worry for God has you in His care.

Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge

WEEKS 6 & 7

The Challenge is to use a form of daily prayer every weekday during Lent. An Order for Daily Prayer, together with daily Readings and Collects is provided. Find a quiet time each day in a comfortable chair to pray and to read a Bible reading, either alone or with someone else. It should take about 15 minutes. You will need a Bible.

AN ORDER FOR DAILY PRAYER

God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth. (John 4.24).

Merciful Lord, grant to your faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Psalm 95.1-5

O come let us sing out to the Lord;
Let us shout in triumph to the rock of our salvation.
Let us come before his face with thanksgiving
And cry out to him joyfully in psalms.
For the Lord is a great God
And a great king above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth
And the peaks of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his and he made it,
His hands moulded dry land.

A Bible Reading (see Daily Readings)

Pause for Reflection on the reading.

Canticle (Te Deum Part 2)

You, Christ, are the king of glory,
The eternal Son of the Father.
When you took our flesh to set us free,
You humbly chose the Virgin's womb.
You overcame the sting of death
And opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
You are seated at God's right hand in glory:
We believe that you will come to be our judge.
Come then, Lord, and help your people,
Bought with the price of your own blood,
And bring us with your saints
To glory everlasting.

Prayers: *For Family and Friends*
 For the Church
 For the World
 For those who are sick or in need

Collect of the Day (See Collects)

The Lord's Prayer

The Ending The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen



WEEK 6

Collect

Most merciful God
Who by the death and resurrection
Of your Son Jesus Christ
Delivered and saved the world:
Grant that by faith in him who suffered on the cross,
We may triumph in the power of his victory;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Monday 3rd April.	John 9: 1 – 17
Tuesday 4th April.	John 9: 18 – 41
Wednesday 5th April.	John 10: 1 – 18
Thursday 6th April.	John 10: 19 – 42
Friday 7th April.	John 11: 1-27 or 12: 1-10
Saturday 8th April.	John 11:28-44 or 12: 37-50

WEEK 7

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God,
Who, in your tender love towards the human race,
Sent your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ
To take upon him our flesh
And to suffer death upon the cross:
Grant that we may follow the example
Of his patience and humility,
And also be made partakers of his resurrection;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Readings:

Monday 10th April.	Luke 22: 1-23
Tuesday 11th April.	Luke 22: 24-53 or 39-53
Wednesday 12th April.	Luke 22: 54-71
Maundy Thursday 13th April.	Luke 23: 1-25
Good Friday 14th April.	John 19: 38-42
Easter Eve 15th April.	John 2: 18-22

You have now completed the Lent Challenge!

To continue Daily Prayer after Easter go to:

www.ireland.anglican.org/prayer-worship/lectionary/daily-prayer.

The short act of worship includes the Collect and Readings for each day – simply click on the Bible reference to see the reading.

Inter-Diocesan Conversations

The following will appear in the Book of Reports for General Synod 2017.

In response to the Commission on Episcopal Ministry and Structure's Motion passed at last year's General Synod, the united dioceses of Limerick and Killaloe and the united dioceses of Tuam, Killala and Achonry have set up a Joint Working Group. This has met on several occasions and the representatives have kept their diocesan councils informed and will report to their diocesan synods in June and September respectively. Their hope is that it may be possible to bring legislation to General Synod in 2018.

The Joint Working Group is looking at three aspects of co-operation...

Joint events: In an effort to know one another better across diocesan boundaries, the two dioceses have agreed to share the following in 2017: a clergy and readers Lenten Quiet Day, a clergy Bookclub Meeting, a family Fun Day, a clergy and readers Ministry Training Day, a lay Conference and a clergy Conference.

Finance: Areas including financial schemes, accounts, assessment levels, strengths and weaknesses of each diocese, working methods and potential synergies have been compared. In broad terms there wouldn't appear to be a compelling financial reason to either amalgamate or stay separate apart from savings on episcopal costs. There will definitely be substantial work involved in the event of uniting two financial schemes. Realistically, there would need to be a long transition time in bringing the finances together and it is

felt that it would be impossible to run a combined diocese of this geographic size with one finance committee and hope to provide proper oversight and support to all parishes.

Both dioceses share common concerns regarding improving standards of parochial financial reporting and governance. Simplified and user-friendly financial systems are required and sharing of financial information between both dioceses is most helpful and the on-going discussions are valuable.

Structures: The Joint Working Group has carefully considered five possible options as a way forward for the dioceses. These options can be summarised briefly as:

- No change – two separate dioceses each with its own bishop.
- Remain as two separate dioceses but with the Bishop of Tuam, Killala & Achonry also serving as an incumbent.
- Amalgamation of the two dioceses under a Diocesan Bishop but with the assistance of a Suffragan Bishop who would also serve as an Incumbent in what is currently Tuam, Killala & Achonry.
- Amalgamation of the two dioceses under one Bishop and transferring parts of either existing dioceses to a neighbouring diocese.
- Amalgamation of the two dioceses under one Bishop.

Among the Joint Working Group, there is a clear consensus in favour of either Option c or b, with very little support for any of the other options.

Supporting Asylum Seekers and Refugees

The Church of Ireland's Refugee Working Groups have launched a new resource on supporting asylum seekers and refugees in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The 14-page document summarises how the Church of Ireland has supported asylum seekers and refugees in recent years and highlights opportunities for members of the Church to become more involved in this area of ministry and service.

The Rt Revd Patrick Rooke, Chairman of the Republic of Ireland Working Group, said: 'This is an excellent resource for all those who want to be informed about the refugee crises and what the response of the two Governments and the Church of Ireland has been. The many statistics and other factual points it contains are testament to the research and information gathering involved.'

The Rt Revd Ken Good, Chairman of the Northern Ireland Working Group, said: 'It is clear that public awareness of the plight of asylum seekers and refugees fluctuates considerably depending on the emotional impact of media coverage. This resource seeks to provide helpful information to keep before us the scale of the human need while also acknowledging people's fears and concerns. Being informed about the facts is important. It is also encouraging to read some good news stories about the practical ways in which Christian Churches and other agencies are responding to this crisis.'

The resource is available online from www.ireland.anglican.org/resources.



Lunchtime Concerts at St Mary's

1.15pm in St Mary's Cathedral, Limerick

Wednesday 5th April
Helen Houlihan (soprano), Peter Sebestyen (cello)
Music by Spohr and Brahms

Wednesday 12th April
Emma English (soprano) and colleagues from LSOM
Music by Schubert and Beethoven

Wednesday 19th April
Sarah-Ellen Murphy (alto), Peter Barley (piano)
Music by Bizet, Quilter, Sibelius and Schumann

Wednesday 26th April
Edel O'Brien (alto), Irina Dernova (piano)

Wednesday 3rd May
Frank Schaefer (cello), Ethna Tinney (piano)

*Free admission - retiring collection in aid of
the Companions of St Mary's Cathedral Music*

Diocesan Organisations

Girls Friendly Society

CLOUGHJORDAN BRANCH

The Diocese and the Branch wish to extend deepest sympathy to Michelle & Gillian Armitage on the death of Lillian Armitage and also Sandra Hayes on the death of Willie Hayes. You are in our thoughts and prayers at this sad time.

All branches have completed their crafts and bible study. Results of all competitions will be available next month following the Service & Prize giving on 1st April.

UP COMING EVENTS

Diocesan Service & Prize day 2017

The Annual Diocesan Service & Prize day will be on Saturday, 1st April 2017 in Borrisokane Church. There will be a full report and photos in next month's magazine.

Diocesan Council Meeting

The next Council meeting will take place on Thursday, 27th April in Cloughjordan at 8pm

Camp Meeting will take place on 11th May in the Rectory, Birr at 8pm. All leaders attending camp are welcome to attend.

All Ireland Council Meeting will take place on 13th May in Dublin. Results of All Ireland completions will be announced at that meeting.

GFS 140 YEAR CELEBRATIONS

This year is the 140th anniversary of GFS in Ireland. We are planning a Service of Celebration in Christ Church, Bray, Co. Wicklow. On 22nd February 1877 the first meeting of GFS in Ireland took place in the Marine Hotel, Bray. Seventeen Working Associates were appointed with five more appointed at a later date. The first President was the Countess of Meath from the nearby Killruddery Estate (the home of the Brabazon family, Earls of Meath) and she was in office from 1878 -1894.

On the 21st May 2017 there will be a Celebration Service in Christ Church Bray, Co Wicklow. The service is at 3pm. Girls would need to be at the church by 2.30 and workers/helpers would need to be there prior to that. Final details will be available soon. Please contact your Branch Leader or Norma Jean Carney if you wish to attend. A bus will be organised depending on numbers wishing to attend. This is a wonderful celebration for GFS in Ireland and promises to be a great day out.

CAMP

Diocesan Camp has been confirmed to take place 23-25 June in Bandon. Further details to follow.

GFS WORLD COUNCIL

Tamara McKenzie from Northern Ireland has been appointed Junior Delegate to World Council and will travel to Perth in July along with GFS Central President and 6 others. Best of luck to everyone preparing to visit Australia for World GFS. The Diocese thanks Michelle Armitage for representing the Diocese and Ireland as Junior Delegate 2014-2017 when World Council was held in Wales.

GFS WORLD THEME PRAYER 2014-2017

Gracious Lord, guide our footsteps of faith that we might walk in your grace and wisdom as we act to serve you. Rekindle afresh in us our spiritual gifts that we might transform ourselves and others, serving the whole body of Christ through GFS. Make us worthy of our calling to service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

Boys' Brigade

1ST TRALEE COMPANY

On a cold, wet and windy St Patrick's Day in Tralee, members of the 1st Tralee Company of The Boys' Brigade braved the elements to take part in the St Patrick's day parade. Although cold the members had a great day. Well done everyone involved!



1st Tralee Company enjoying the Parade

On Sunday 5th March, we welcomed the 1st Tralee Company of the Boys Brigade to St. Johns for a Service of Dedication & Enrolment with Holy Communion. We enjoyed their singing of 'Will your anchor hold in the storms of life' and their contributions of readings and prayers.

ROSCREA COMPANY

Roscrea Boys had a wonderful visit from the RSPCA, Roscrea Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and learnt all about the work done in rescuing and re-homing animals, mainly pets, but also donkeys and horses and some less friendly such as swans and foxes! Two dogs and one kitten to show the boys and the boys gave donations of pet food and money to help with RSPCA's ministry to animals.



Roscrea Boys Brigade evening with animals

Three delegates from the Diocese, Lucy Kavanagh, Diocesan President, Betty Delahunt, Diocesan Treasurer and Margaret Schutz, Finance & Central Services Co-ordinator, attended the All Ireland Mothers' Union Triennial Conference in An Grianan from 10th to 12th March.



All Ireland President, Mrs Phyllis Grothier with Josephine Ndagoye, Provincial President Tanzania, attending Worldwide Council, which Ireland had the great privilege of hosting.

It was a packed and very busy weekend and a great opportunity to learn more about the work that Mothers' Union does worldwide while also concentrating on our work at home.



Margaret Shultz (Limerick) and Betty Delahunt (Birr)

Mothers' Union World Wide President, Lynne Temby and CEO, Bev Julien were the key note speakers and both left us in no doubt as to the huge effect that MU has on millions of families across the globe. Of course, with the many challenges that we face, this does mean that we rely heavily on our members and the tremendous work that they carry out within their branches.

All Ireland Chaplain, Dean Raymond Ferguson, gave a wonderful talk on "Working with the Clergy" so that together, we can make MU more relevant at branch level. He stressed that it was most important to keep the lines of communication open at all times. As with any organisation MU is evolving and changing to meet present day needs and part of the conference was taken up with discussing a new constitution, but it was made very clear that we would remain a "member led" organisation with prayer as our rock.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

- 5th April – MU council Meeting, Moneygall Hall 7.30pm
- 6th April – Mothers' Union All Ireland Holy Communion Service, Christ Church Cathedral 11.15am. Hosted by Limerick & Killaloe Diocese. All welcome.
- 8th April – All Ireland Council 10.30am Christ Church Cathedral Music Room. Bring your own lunch.
- 21st May – MU Way Festival Service, St. Patrick's Church, Kenmare 12pm attended by All Ireland President, Mrs. Phyllis Grothier and Central Chaplain, Bishop Andrew Proud, Preacher. Please make a special effort to attend.
- 9th September – All Ireland MU Big Sing, NCH
- 16th September – Diocesan Big Sing, St. Mary's Cathedral, Limerick.

United Diocesan Youth Council

FUTURE EVENTS

Sat 1st April UDYC Fundraising Cake Sale & Coffee Morning, Adare Methodist Hall, 10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Sat 1st April UDYC Annual General Meeting @ 2.30 pm. Adare Methodist Hall, Everyone Welcome

Fri 7th - Sun 9th April UDYC South West Alive Junior Weekend. Muckross Youth Centre, Muckross, Killarney, Co. Kerry. 10 plus year olds

Fri 21st April - Sun 23rd April UDYC Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend. Birr Outdoor Education Centre, Roscrea Road, Birr, Co. Offaly Birr. Secondary School Upwards

Fri 2nd June - Mon 5th June Diocesan Confirmation Weekend with Tuam Diocese. Esker Youth Village, Esker Athenry, Co. Galway. 2016 & 2017 Confirmation Candidates

SOUTH WEST ALIVE JUNIOR WEEKEND 2017

Let the adventure begin! Our South West Alive Junior Weekend 2017 will take place at the splendid facilities of the Muckross Youth Centre near Killarney from Friday 7th April - Sunday 9th April 2017 (start of Easter Holidays) for what promises to be an amazing weekend of fun, faith & fellowship. So if you are 10 plus years of age and want a weekend of adventure book today to avoid disappointment!!

During the weekend the following fabulous activities will also be on offer: Exciting Times of Worship led by Steve Grasham (Youth Ministry Development Officer - South), Icebreaker Games, Full day of water & land outdoor activities at Star Outdoors Kenmare (www.staroutdoors.ie) to include kayaking, water trampoline & slide, banana boat, archery, mountain biking, obstacle course and team games, Muckross Traditional Farm, Disco, Charades, Good Food, And much more FUN, FAITH and FELLOWSHIP than one could ever imagine.....

The weekend will cost €100 per person or €90 each if more than one from same family either this weekend or Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend. The fee will include all transport, activities, food and accommodation. Return Transport from/to Roscrea, Moneygall, Nenagh, Limerick, Adare & Newcastlewest.

SPRING MADNESS OUTDOOR ADVENTURE WEEKEND 2017

Spring Madness Outdoor Adventure Weekend 2017 will be an action packed weekend taking place at Birr Outdoor Education Centre (www.birroec.ie) at end of Easter school holidays from Friday 21st April - Sunday 23rd April 2017 for all those attending Secondary School.

We plan to have many exciting activities over the weekend including: Varied & Lively Times of Worship with teaching, Icebreaker Games, Water & Land Outdoor Activities (Canoeing on Lough Derg from Portumna, Rock Climbing & Abseiling in Slieve Bloom Mountains, Gorge Walking at Cadamstown, Zip Wire at Centre in Birr, Table Quiz, Disco, Lots of good food and a little bit of sleep!!! Thus if you want an adventure weekend book today for Spring Madness Adventure Weekend 2017!!!

The weekend will cost €100 per person or €90 each if more than one from same family attending either this weekend or South West Alive

Junior Weekend. The fee will include all transport, activities, food and accommodation. Return transport will be available from/to event serving Limerick, Nenagh, Moneygall & Roscrea. Final Date for receipt of bookings is Thursday 13th April 2017.

DIOCESAN CONFIRMATION WEEKEND WITH TUAM DIOCESE

Our United Diocesan Confirmation Weekend will take place this year from Friday 2nd – Mon 5th June 2017 (June Bank Holiday Weekend) at Esker Youth Village, Esker, Athenry, Co. Galway. This event is hoped to be a joint event with Diocese of Tuam, Killala & Achonry. We do hope that it will be possible to offer transport to those attending this year from the following locations: Farranfore, Newcastlewest, Adare, Limerick, Nenagh, Moneygall, Roscrea & Birr.

This weekend will be for all 2016 & 2017 Confirmation Candidates. If anyone feels that it might be easier to come with a friend from their local area that would be fine too, The weekend will be an ideal chance to get to meet other Confirmation Candidates from throughout our United Diocese, Diocese of Tuam, Killala & Achonry and possibly from other Dioceses!

Further details on programme, speaker, cost and other details in relation to Confirmation Weekend will be included in May Newlink and all clergy will also be circulated with further information and booking forms shortly.

For more information on any of our events or activities, please contact Edward (087) 2907553 or Oscar on (086) 2476327, Email: udyc@limerick.anglican.org or our UDYC Facebook page.

Until next month,
Sophia
Mobile: 087 1339996
598 words

Diocesan Board of Mission

Church of Ireland
LIMERICK AND KILLALOE
DIOCESAN BOARD OF MISSION

AN INVITATION TO A MISSION EVENING

Wednesday 5th April

in

TEACH AN SOLAS (TRALEE PARISH CENTRE)

at

8.00 P.M.

**SPIRITUAL TOURISM
- OUR MISSION TO VISITORS**

SPEAKER: Archdeacon Simon Lumby

Everyone, irrespective of Christian denomination, with an interest in mission both within their local community and overseas, is very welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served after the meeting

SCHOOL NEWS

St. Nicholas' National School, Adare

Our quiz team headed off to the Radisson Blu Hotel in Co. Clare for Round 2 of the Credit Union Schools' Quiz on March 5th where winning teams from the chapters in Co. Limerick, Co. Clare and parts of Co. Tipperary competed against one another. The questions were very tricky on this occasion and well done to our team members, David, Olivia, Ingrid and Aedin, who represented the school very well.

We welcomed Lianka De Wet to school on March 6th and hope that she has many fruitful years with us.

This year the school is working toward its sixth green flag and as part of the activities we held an International Day on March 9th to celebrate the many countries and cultures in our school community. The senior pupils prepared wonderful projects on a variety of countries and these were on display in the school hall on the 9th. The pupils (with some help from Mums and Dads!) also prepared and brought in a variety of foods from those counties. We had great fun sampling all these delicious treats and parents were welcomed to the festivities in the afternoon. Thank you to Ms Anglim and her 'Green Team' for organising the event and to all who made the day such a great success.

Seachtain na Gaeilge was celebrated in school just before St. Patrick's Day with lots of activities through Irish with the emphasis on speaking Irish in and around the school.



Ready for Lá Gaelge in Adare



Some Irish dancing in Adare

We held a Lá Gaelge on March 16th when we all dressed up in green, white or gold and spent the day taking part in fun activities. We had a treasure hunt as Gaelge, when competing groups had to

follow the clues and collect letters. Finally they had to work out the answer from the letters collected. This was followed by a Tráth na gCeist (quiz) with mixed teams. There was a mix of easy and difficult questions which suited all age groups. In the afternoon we moved up to the hall for our céilí and the day came to an end with some cluichí in the playground.



Cluichí in Adare

The senior classes took part in Limerick's 5-a-side soccer competition on March 21st. We entered two girls' and two boys' teams in this year's competition and well done to everyone who participated.

Noel and Liza McMeekin and their team visited school on March 28th to present prizes to all the pupils for their hard work in Bible Times during 2016.

The school closes for the Easter Holidays on April 7th and we wish everyone a happy and safe Easter break.

St. Mary's No. 2 National School, Nenagh

Spring arrived at last! Like St Brigid's cloak, it has rapidly covered our corner of the world with green shoots and waving daffodils. St Patrick's Day will enhance the green further, reminding us to get to our gardens and sow our seeds and food.

These moments in the year are part of who we are today, as we were hundreds of years ago. In school, we celebrate those important times and seasons. We celebrate the skills to be learned, the importance of our traditions and the sense of community achieved through celebration.

During the days of Lent all classes work on key aspects of the Social, Personal and Health Education curriculum. We encourage the pupils to look inward and examine their thoughts and actions. Leading up to St Patrick's Day, we explore identity and culture through Seachtain na Gaeilge.

Looking to our environment, as part of the Biodiversity flag for Green Schools, the pupils have painted bird boxes to attract birds to school. Many thanks to Mrs Quin for driving this project, and to Melissa Tallon for coming to school as a parent volunteer.

Our mini-fair took place on Thursday 15th March. On this day, the pupils sold their home made cakes and bought pre-loved books. The pupils hope to raise enough for a number of resources for their classrooms.

Athletics coaching began in March with Mr Dave O'Shea.

On a sad note, we are so sorry to lose Mrs Esther Quin at the end of term. Our loss is Cork's gain as our lovely teacher and kind friend of nine years leaves to take up a new opportunity in her home county. Mrs Quin will be sorely missed but we wish her every success and joy on her new journey.

Go n-éirí le gach léirtheoir trí Seachtain na Gaeilge agus ar Lá 'le Pádraig. Beannachtaí na Féile oraibh!

St Michael's National School, Limerick

We await the arrival of a specialist skipping instructor next week to encourage new ways of incorporating skipping into children's daily activity. Pupils from 1st and 2nd classes wore a physical activity monitor for a week, in conjunction with a study carried out in Mary Immaculate College. We look forward to hearing results as to how active our pupils are. Once again, some Mary I Maths students are teaching and filming Senior Infants and 1st Classes. The topic this year is Measurement and they are thoroughly enjoying the experience.



Mary I Maths Measurement

Springtime brings its usual round of sporting activities. 5th and 6th classes have been busy participating in Spikeball tournaments and are now eagerly anticipating a 5-a-side soccer tournament next week. Tag rugby is also a new activity we are embracing.

We are hoping that our annual 'Tricks for Sticks' hockey coaching will happen soon. These now regular sporting activities have become so popular and loved by all the pupils. These extra opportunities really enhance the P.E. curriculum.

We are delighted to welcome Shoko Fujita to the school. She is a UL student who has chosen to do her work placement with us. As always, it is hugely beneficial to have another adult to lend a hand in the classrooms and on trips.

5th and 6th classes were busy preparing for their 'Europe Day'. They cooked the food from many different countries and each brought in some items traditional to those countries. They presented short Powerpoint presentations about each country, introducing others to interesting facts and sharing different cultures.



Europe Day

We are looking forward to welcoming the Bible Times team on their annual visit at the end of the month. Each class is presently busy practising Irish dancing for a whole-school display, celebrating our national holiday.

St Cronan's National School, Roscrea

Our Lenten Project this year, is in aid of Irish Lung Cancer, and was launched on Pancake Tuesday, when families and friends joined us for freshly cooked pancakes and homemade treats served by our sixth class pupils. Some exciting fundraising activities were planned to add to the €370 collected on that day.

Pupils dressed up as a character from their favourite book to mark World Book Day. Congratulations to the winners – Marguerite (Maleficent) and Lucy (Gangster Granny).

A Healthy Lunch Competition and a No Homework Week will take place, as well as an Easter Egg Hunt and a Whole-School Dance Performance choreographed entirely by Aisling and Adam.

There is a strong focus on Health and Fitness as pupils measured their lung capacity, and engage in Walk on Wednesday and daily exercise routines in order to improve it. Many thanks to our two visiting nurses, Amanda and Linda, who shared some healthy- living tips.

Pupils are enjoying basketball, tennis and rugby lessons and we look forward to practising our new skills at a friendly basketball blitz with St. Mary's National School, Nenagh soon.

Congratulations to Emma who won first prize in an Art competition organised by The Roscrea Lion's Club to mark the launch of The Rosemary Project.

We join with the whole community in sending our very best wishes to both Edith Rafter and Nevin Alton as they celebrate their very special birthdays.

Cloughjordan No 1 National School

We were delighted to welcome Noel, Liza and staff from the Postal Bible School to our school at the end of February for the Annual Presentation and Prize giving. This is always a great occasion when pupils choose prizes for the work they carried out during the year.

It was a pleasure to welcome Rev Shannon and Rev Terry to school on Ash Wednesday 1st March, to lead a short service of Holy Communion for the school and parish.

Congratulations to Lisa Mooney, Lucy Fitzgerald, Ava Austin, Alison Grant, Ross Austin, Andrew Hayes, Stuart Fox Powell and David Perse who represented the school at the Munster Schools Table Tennis League 2017 in Kinsale on 1st March. Both teams came second in their divisions on the day, a great achievement as they faced stiff competition on the day and some players playing at this level for the first time.



Boys Team

Both teams returned to Kinsale the following week and played in the qualifying competition for this year's All Ireland Schools Table Tennis Championships. Well done to Lucy, Lisa, Ava and Alison who emerged victorious and will represent the school, and Munster in the All Ireland Championship in Dublin at the end of April. Best of luck girls!



Victorious Girls Team

To mark World Book Day 2017 all classes enjoyed a visit to Sheelagh na Gig bookshop in Cloughjordan where local author Nigel Mulligan read to them and they got a chance to use their World Book Day vouchers.

Thank you very much to everybody who supported our Easter Egg Raffle and Bring and Buy Sale in school. This was a great success and raised approx €900, to be shared between BUMBLEance, children's ambulance service and the Irish Kidney Association. It was a pleasure to welcome Oral Hogan from the Irish Kidney Association to speak to us and we hope that BUMBLEance will be able to visit our school soon.

Thank you to so many who have been helping out with various sports at school: to Mr. Casey and Mr. Hassett from St Michael's N.S. who, once again, invited our hurling enthusiasts to join with them for hurling training, to Brian England who has been training our younger hurlers, to Patsy Farrell who has been assisting with basketball and to Joe & Roisin Cahill who have continued camogie. We are very grateful to all concerned for making these wonderful opportunities available to our pupils.

A very big "Thank you" to Declan Gaffney who has been busy gardening with us, helping to plant and care for plants in our tunnel, which were wonderful gifts for Mother's Day.

Thank you very much to SuperValu, Roscrea who kindly donated an Easter Hamper to the school, to Mrs. Esme Grant for her help with this, and to the shopkeepers in Cloughjordan who are selling lines on our behalf.

We look forward with great excitement to the official opening of our recently completed extension at school. We look forward to welcoming Bishop Kenneth and former chairpersons of our Board of Management, Canon Stephen Neill and Rev Ruth Gill, and many others for this celebratory occasion.

Kiltallagh National School, Castlemaine

ART EDUCATION

Art education for children has come under political and curriculum pressure in recent years. Even though the subject of art and design is on the national curriculum, the focus of successive governments on literacy, maths and science has marginalised its teaching in primary schools.

Art educationalists, and psychologists who study children's art, claim that it promotes educational benefits that other school subjects cannot. These benefits come both from practising art and from learning about it. This suggests that the continued marginalisation of art in schools prevents children from gaining a broad and well-rounded education. So what are the benefits of art education?

Children can take their experiences of the world and transform them through art, making new connections and relationships through their inventive minds. Their knowledge, memories and fantasies all feed their imagination. Art allows children to explore, build on and record their own creative and imaginative ideas.

Making pictures allows children to express their feelings and ideas, both as a means of self-expression and to communicate to others. These may include reliving a happy event they recently experienced (a birthday party or a day out), or drawing out some sad feelings as a therapeutic exercise. Older children may use pictures for more conceptual purposes, expressing their concerns and ideas.

Pictures encourage us to think about and understand the world visually, instead of restricting learning and the acquisition of knowledge to words and numbers alone. Visual thinking helps children learn other subjects. It is a skill used in a wide variety of professions, including the sciences as well as the arts.

Making pictures helps children observe the subject matter of the real-world scene they are drawing from more closely, and makes them better observers of detail in the world around them. Developing observational skills through picture-making facilitates the child's visual sensitivity to the world.

Pictures enable children to explore and test out ideas, while making decisions on how they choose to depict them. For instance, children will learn problem-solving skills as they grapple with trying to create a three-dimensional scene from the world on a two-dimensional page. With practice, children learn that concentration and persistence allow them to get closer to the pictures they are trying to achieve.

A child's picture is his or her own. It has worth in its own right, without having to be measured or judged by others as right or wrong. The child has the authority to say what the picture is of, or what it communicates, building up their confidence and self-esteem.

Although we still need more research to test these claims, we know that areas within the right hemisphere of the brain are the primary seat for processing and developing the learning gained through participation in art activities. It is likely, therefore, that an art education teaches a specific set of thinking skills not adequately addressed elsewhere in the curriculum. Children need a broad education that includes the arts, and the continued development of our society depends upon a creative education.

We here in Kiltallagh recognise the importance of Art in the lives of our children.

We were very privileged to have world renowned artist Pauline Bewick, along with our Artist in Residence- Kate Landers visit us on Wednesday last.



Pauline Bewick visits Kiltallagh NS

Oxmantown National School, Birr

GYMNASTIC CLASSES started on the 28th February for all classes, and run for 6 weeks with Mrs. Emer Feehan. The cost per child is €12 but the Parents Association have agreed to subsidise 50% of the cost so the cost per child is €6, thank you.

For SHROVE TUESDAY on the 28th February, the Parents Association organised to serve pancakes at break time, children donated €2 which will go towards Tallaght Hospital.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

The treasurer of the Board of Management wishes to thank those parents that have paid their voluntary contribution of €110 and would like to remind those parents who have not paid to please pay at their earliest convenience. This money is spent directly on the children, it will buy art and craft materials, books, technology etc. for the benefit of all children.

THANK YOU to all the families that sent in clothes for the clothes collection, the school gathered 220kgs and the money raised will go towards school funds, well done.

ENGINEER WEEK is holding an exhibition suitable for 3rd - 6th class students. Dr. Ken visited Birr Theatre on Thursday 9th of March! It was free for the children, starting at 9.45 and lasted for an hour.



Visiting a Water Treatment Plant



Visiting a Water Treatment Plant

Rathkeale No. 2 National School

We held an action afternoon on Friday 10th March and successfully planted our apple trees and sowed our wildflower garden.



Planting Apple Trees

We hope the wildflowers will encourage more biodiversity in our school grounds by attracting butterflies and bees.



Sowing Wildflowers

Our Open Hour for new pupils took place on Wednesday 8th March. The closing date for applications for September is 30th April. Anyone wishing to enrol in the school should contact us for an application form.

Congratulations to our substitute teacher, Rachelle Robbins on successfully meeting the requirements for probation. Ms Robbins will be with us until 31st May.

We all enjoyed a visit to St Ann's Girls National School in Rathkeale on Wednesday 15th March to see their production of Alice in Wonderland.

The pupils are organising a Coffee Afternoon and Cake Sale in aid of school funds, from 1-2:30pm on Friday 7th April. All are welcome and we value everyone's support.

School will close for Easter on 7th April and will reopen on Monday 24th April.

St John's National School, Shannon

NEW APPOINTMENT

In December St John's NS Shannon welcomed Emma O'Shea to the Staff as Mainstream class teacher. With enrollments rising the school reverts to two teacher status and also welcomed two special education teachers. Emma is delighted to be teaching the Senior Classes. Emma originally comes from Adare, Co. Limerick. She began her teaching career in Dublin after graduating, in 2012, from the Church of Ireland College of Education.



Emma O'Shea newly appointed at St John's NS Shannon

Villiers School



BOYS' HOCKEY

Congratulations to our junior A boys' hockey squad who overcame Ashton school in Villiers last Wednesday in their Munster cup semi-final. The score finished 1-1 at full time and we went on to win 4-2 on penalty strokes. We face Midleton College in the final which is provisionally set for Wednesday 5th April in Villiers. Best of luck to the boys on the day and hopefully they can retain the cup.

Our senior A boys face Bandon Grammar in their Munster cup semi-final in Bandon this Wednesday. Never an easy place to get a result. Our match preparations culminated with a trip to Dublin recently where we beat Newpark School 4-2 and drew with the current All Ireland Schools champions St Andrew's College 3-3.

Our senior B's overcame Ashton 7-2 in their cup semi-final and await the winners of Bandon Grammar and Midleton College in the final. Again we wish them luck.

GIRLS HOCKEY

Our senior A girls recently lost 2-3 to Crescent Comprehensive in their hard fought cup semi-final. This is our first year in recent times back in the 'A' section and the girls have equipped themselves admirably and will finish mid-table in the league.

Our senior C's are still in the running for their league title and our junior C's have one match remaining in their league, a draw or win will crown them champions.

BOYS RUGBY

Congratulations to our senior boys who beat Midleton College in the Mungret Shield semi-final in Villiers last Wednesday. A ding dong battle with Villiers winning by 22-19 in the final few minutes. Try scorers were Daragh Oxley and Daniel Mulcahy. The lads now face Bantry in the final which is to be played in UL over the coming weeks.

Congratulations to our 1st yrs who have been promoted from Munster's 3rd division to the 2nd division. And finally to our u15 boys who are through to the semi-final of the Cleary cup v Waterpark, Waterford over the coming weeks.

SKI TRIP

Our 28th ski trip, under the guidance of Mr Sutton, returned home safely from Pinzolo in Italy. The weather was excellent and the snow good. Plans are already afoot for next year's trip to Madonna Di Campiglio, near Pinzolo.

DONAL RYAN

Donal Ryan is an Irish author from Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. He has written three novels and one collection of short stories. All were released to critical acclaim and one of his novels, *The Spinning Heart*, is now on the Leaving Cert course. Ryan's main inspiration lies in his rural native environment, which provides an authentic background to his stories. His colloquial yet poetic prose beautify the difficult themes he explores, such as death and loneliness. The award-winning author visited Villiers

School for the second time last Thursday to speak to some of our Senior cycle students. He offered them an insight into the creative writing process; answered their many questions; and gave them advice on the fast approaching English exam. Villiers would like to sincerely thank Mr Ryan for his articulate, humorous and inspiring talk.

VILLIERS SCHOOL BREAKFAST CONFERENCE

The Villiers School Breakfast Conference in celebration of International Women's Day, which was themed 'Be Bold For Change', featured a series of presentations given by inspirational female leaders from the Limerick region in the areas of business, health, academia and the arts. On International Women's Day, Villiers School welcomed Professor Colette Cowan, CEO UL Hospital Group, Ms Rose Hynes, CEO Shannon Group, Ms Judi Curtin, Author, and Dr Wynette Redington, UL Governing Authority, who spoke to the students on the day as a part of their breakfast event.



Prof Colette Cowan and Head Mistress Jill Storey with students on International Women's Day

VILLIERS TEACH NA GAEILGE

Congratulations to our TY's who recently organised a day promoting Irish in school. Different events included poster competitions, orienteering through Irish, an Irish table quiz, a form 3 Gaelic Football tournament and all food menus in Irish and much more.



All she had said was it was time for her annual lawnmower service



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Crisis Appeal for East Africa



Bishops' Appeal
Church of Ireland World Aid and Development

In an urgent response to the crisis in East Africa, the Church of Ireland Bishops' Appeal has launched an emergency appeal to raise funds for Christian Aid and Tearfund, who are responding to the crisis, working with partners in the region to provide urgently needed humanitarian assistance. The Bishops' Appeal is appealing for contributions from parishes and individuals throughout the island of Ireland to help with the disaster relief efforts.



A mother with her 12-month old daughter who has been diagnosed with severe acute malnutrition (photo: Andreea Campeanu/Christian Aid)

TEARFUND REPORTS:

Famine has been declared in South Sudan, the first time in six years that anywhere in the world has reached this level of food insecurity. In 2011 260,000 people died in Somalia as a result of famine. Earlier this year the monitoring group FEWS NET warned of four looming famines; in Yemen, Somalia, North-Eastern Nigeria and South Sudan in 2017. South Sudan is now the first to be declared. In the world's newest country, the situation is set to worsen as food stocks become depleted. More than three years of conflict combined with the continued devaluation of the South Sudanese Pound, acute malnutrition, difficulties in transporting aid, and below average harvests, have brought about this scenario.



A mother and child at a feeding centre in South Sudan (photo: Polly Hughes/Tearfund)

CHRISTIAN AID REPORTS:

People are dying daily from hunger and malnutrition across East Africa. This is the worst humanitarian crisis since 1945. Famine has been declared in parts of South Sudan, where 100,000

people face starvation and nearly 5 million people urgently need food. The crisis follows more than three years of devastating conflict, which has left millions of people without a safe place to call home.

The situation is also grave in Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia where 14 million people are going hungry every day, caught up in the region's worst drought in 50 years. In Somalia alone, over 360,000 children under five are extremely malnourished.

With your help, we will provide school meals to children, give cash and food vouchers to families, and repair water sources.

In Kenya and Ethiopia, our partners are ready to respond in some of the worst-affected areas. In Somalia, we plan to work with our ACT Alliance sister agencies to provide support.

In South Sudan, our partners have long been providing life-saving humanitarian assistance: distributing seeds, farming tools and fishing gear so families can access nutritious food. We have also provided agricultural training, repaired community water points, built latrines and handed out sanitation and hygiene supplies.



Left behind in Kenya – Tesso Yattani Abudo, her husband and grandson in Northern Kenya struggle to find enough to eat, after the rest of the family have migrated to keep their livestock alive (photo: Dub Guyo/PACIDA)

The Rt Revd Patrick Rooke, Chairperson of Bishops' Appeal, said: 'Hunger on a massive scale is looming across South Sudan, northern Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen, as a combination of drought and conflict has left nearly 20 million people without enough food to feed themselves. Kenya and Ethiopia are also on the verge of crisis, with millions in need of humanitarian assistance. Across these countries, people are in critical need of food, water and health support with women and children suffering the most. The United Nations has referred to this as the worst humanitarian crisis since 1945, and we cannot stand by and allow the suffering to continue.'

Parish and individual donations are encouraged and greatly appreciated at this time. Dates for parish responses can be chosen locally over the coming weeks with proceeds sent to: Bishops' Appeal, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6. Donations can also be made online at <https://store.ireland.anglican.org/donations>. Queries from parishes should be directed to Bishops' Appeal diocesan representatives or to the Education Advisor, Alexandra Reihill, at bishopsappeal@ireland.anglican.org.

A View from the Pew - Accountability

by Salters Sterling



When I was writing for the March issue of Newslink it had been my intention to move on from bewilderment to the message of Easter. That was before the Tuam Babies and the Grace Case re-entered our headlines and dominated the Television and Radio News Bulletins. But they did and my bewilderment increased especially when a friend, a Sister in the Bon Secours Order wrote enquiring what we were thinking about the disclosures. When one

begins to think about that question, and indeed about all such questions, there can be only one response. Please tell us what you know. A comment without knowledge is impertinent and very unlikely to be helpful. What we need are the facts and the truth. Without them we are in a moral wilderness - which was what I was writing about for the March number.

So here we are again as for another time my gaze falls on the East Window in St. Brendan's, Birr. As I look I remember that the Window is not as it was originally designed by C. E. Kempe, to the instruction of the Fourth Earl of Rosse. The Earl had desired that a representation of the Crucifixion should occupy the centre portion of the tracery. The Select Vestry of the time could not accept such a representation. It was too much like the Art associated with Roman Catholicism and that would never do. After what today would be called a cooling off period a representation of the Archangel Michael to replace the Crucifixion

was proposed by the Earl and accepted by the Vestry and the Window was installed. This is a true story with layers of meaning some of which might be significant for our bewildering times and also for Easter. Bear with me as I begin to explore them.



Detail of the East Window, in which Archangel Michael has been substituted for Christ Crucified

The first lesson that strikes me is that in rejecting the representation of the Crucifixion the people of the Church of the time refused to go close to the ultimate wilderness. For that is what Calvary is. Geographically the rubbish dump of the City of Jerusalem, outside the Walls. Humanly the place where, in agony of suffering, Jesus of Nazareth experiences both rejection and reconciliation. "My God, My God why have you forsaken me". "Into Thine Hands, O God, I commit my Spirit". The Wilderness of the Exodus and the Wilderness of Calvary have much

in common with our bewilderment. The sameness of the words tell the story. It is our willingness and capacity to go through the wilderness and not avoid it that leads ultimately to a share in the Glory which is the encounter with the Risen Lord. We have this choice as in Lent we turn towards Easter.

Or again I note the contrasting significance of the Michael the Archangel and Jesus the Crucified Christ. The meaning of Michael from its Hebrew origins signifies the one who is like God. The meaning of the Crucified Christ is the one who is really God. As in Lent we turn towards Easter will our choice be the real thing or something not quite the real thing?

And thinking still about those dreadful things that are inescapably part of our heritage - and those things happening today in our time of which a future generation will be ashamed and distressed - where are we when it comes to accountability? The current dominant culture of Ireland and indeed of elsewhere does not easily accept the need for accountability in ourselves or in others. We don't do blaming and shaming and that's what makes so searing our agony over Grace and the Babies of many places. We vilify Herod but cannot bring ourselves to implement the consequences of evil doing in our own society. The Window is rather like that. In it are representations of the Mocking of Christ, the Road to Golgotha, Christ before Pilate, Isaiah prophesying the Crucifixion, the Ascension. Of the Crucifixion itself, and of the Resurrection itself, it is ignorant.

Ignorant of the greatest ever act of accountability - The Crucifixion. Ignorant of the greatest ever act of life-giving solidarity and acceptance - The Resurrection. As I look on the Window I am learning a very great deal from its ignorance and I hope and pray that I am learning not to ignore the great tragedies of our own time. If I can do that my Easter will be a happy one and the pseudonym "Grace" will assist that journey too.



The East Window of St Brendan's Church, Birr

The Journey to Good Friday

By Ven Wayne Carney, Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert



Pilate asked Jesus 'What is truth?' – John 18:37-38

Do you go to church on Good Friday? Many of us may remember when Good Friday services were well-attended. Today, we mark Good Friday in a variety of ways, but often congregations are few in number. For many people, the most important liturgies of Christianity are abbreviated to the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and Jesus' Resurrection from the dead on Easter Sunday – with nothing in-between. If we miss Good Friday, the Resurrection loses some of its power, its significance.

Going to church in Holy Week means journeying with Jesus in all that happens. This is not just reading a story: God is eternal (which means 'outside of time'); when we are worshipping God, we are experiencing eternity. And so we are present with Jesus and his disciples as he comes to the culmination of his earthly ministry. Being involved in liturgy in this way, we are not just spectators, but participants – and we can understand our role, our place in the life, death, and resurrection of our Friend, our Lord, our Saviour, our God – Jesus Christ.

Our Anglican tradition involves hearing the entire Passion story read on Good Friday from John's Gospel. It is more interesting to listen to, and easier to understand, if it is read in parts, with the congregation taking on the role of the crowd. This also serves to highlight the roles that the participants have in the drama we know as the Passion. Let us look briefly at some of the characters from the Passion story, and look at how we might identify with them – involving us personally in the unfolding drama.

PETER

It is easy to criticise Peter for denying (three times!) that he knew Jesus. Jesus' friend, the chosen leader of the disciples: how could he have done that? But have we ever played down our relationship with the Church, with Jesus, with God, when we're talking to people who are dismissive of Christianity? "Do you ever go to church?" "Oh, well, you know, once in a while, Christmas and Easter, just to keep my mother happy." Denying Jesus comes in many forms.

CAIAPHAS

"You do not understand that it is better for you to have one man die for the people than to have the whole nation destroyed." Caiaphas' words may sound noble, but if the Roman authorities reacted badly to what he perceived as an uprising caused by Jesus' followers, he could lose his position, his authority, his wealth. Do we ever put our comfortable position in the Church, in our employment, in our place in society ahead of the good of others?

PONTIUS PILATE

Pilate has no principles – he sees no reason to have Jesus killed, but is willing to let Jesus die in order to placate the high priests and the crowd, and keep his position safe. Are we willing to do the right thing when we're faced with a difficult decision?

THE CROWD

On Palm Sunday, they shouted 'Hosanna!' A few days later, it was "Crucify him!" Participating in the reading of the Passion reminds us that we are there. We're the ones doing the shouting. Going to church, praying the prayers, saying the Creed on a Sunday, and then sometimes crucifying Jesus by our words and deeds every other day of the week. Following Jesus is more than an hour once a week.

JESUS

We are familiar with the phrase, "Jesus died for our sins." But it means that on the Cross, he took on the sins of all of humanity. War, terror, torture, mass murder – he took the blame for all of them. There is a story that the reason Jesus called out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" is that he felt that God the Father turned his back on him, unable to look at the ugliness of all the sins of humanity gathered in one man. But all of that sin – our sin – died with Jesus. Our sins were nailed to that Cross. That separation from God (and that's what sin is) ended, from God's point of view, with the death of Jesus, and we all have received new life with him in his Resurrection.

May this Good Friday be a time when the Cross becomes for us more than a piece of jewellery, more than a Church decoration, but is for us a symbol of life, of hope, of our relationship with God now, and in the life to come.



When the cock crowed the 3rd time, Jesus looked at Peter, who wept bitterly – Luke 22:59-62

Easter: the triumph over the barriers we create

by Canon Patrick Comerford, Priest-in-Charge, Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group

In the Western tradition of the Church, at this time of the year, we have traditionally contemplated the cross, and then the empty tomb. But we have often neglected Christ's resting place, his tomb, and given little thought to what was happening in the Holy Sepulchre on the second day, the Saturday.

Holy or Great Saturday is observed solemnly in the Orthodox Church, with hymns and readings that explore the theme of the Harrowing of Hell. The traditional icon of the Harrowing of Hell reminds us that God reaches into the deepest depths to pull forth souls into the kingdom of light. It reminds us how much we are unable to comprehend – let alone take to heart as our own – our credal statement about Christ's descent into Hell – 'He descended into Hell!'

Christ's descent into Hell is referred to in Saint Peter's Pentecost sermon in Acts 2, and again in I Peter 3:15b- 4:8, where we are told that when Christ died he went and preached to the spirits in prison 'who in former times did not obey ... For this is the reason the Gospel was proclaimed even to the dead, so that ... they might live in the spirit as God does.'



The Harrowing of Hell – a traditional Orthodox icon

In the New Revised Standard Version, I Peter 4:6 reads that the gospel was 'proclaimed even to the dead ...' reflecting the original Greek. The New International Version translation, however, says the Gospel 'was preached even to those who are now dead ...' But the word 'now' is not in the Greek text.

The Early Church taught that after his death Christ descended into hell and rescued all the souls, starting with Adam and Eve. The traditional icon of the Harrowing of Hell links intimately the Cross with Resurrection, and Christ's death with the Raising from the Dead. As Christ is raised from the dead he also plummets the depths to bring up, to raise up, those who are dead. The Harrowing of Hell carries us into the gap in time between Christ's death and resurrection, breaking down

the barriers of time and space.

In icons of the Harrowing of Hell, Christ stands on the shattered doors of hell. Sometimes, two angels are shown in the pit binding Satan. And we see Christ pulling out of hell Adam and Eve, along with all humanity. Christ breaks down the doors of hell and leads the souls of the lost into heaven.

It is the most radical reversal we can imagine. Death does not have the last word, we need not live our lives entombed in fear. If Adam and Eve are forgiven, and the Sin of Adam is annulled and destroyed, who is beyond forgiveness?

Archbishop Rowan Williams has written beautifully in *The Indwelling of Light on the Harrowing of Hell*. Christ is the new Adam who rescues humanity from its past, and who starts history anew. 'The resurrection ... is an introduction – to our buried selves, to our alienated neighbours, to our physical world!' He says: 'Adam and Eve stand for wherever it is in the human story that fear and refusal began ... (This) icon declares that wherever that lost moment was or is – Christ (is) there to implant the possibility ... of another future.'

At Easter, the icon of the Harrowing of Hell tells us that there are no limits to God's ability to search us out and to know us. Christ breaks down the gates of Hell, and as the icon powerfully shows, he rips all of sinful humanity from the clutches of death. He descends into the depths of our sin and alienation from God; and by plumbing the depths of hell he suffuses all that is lost and sinful with the radiance of divine goodness, joy and light.

Christ's descent into hell pushes back hell's boundaries. He reclaims this zone for life, pushing back the gates of death, where God is not, to the farthest limits possible, and shatters all the barriers we create in time and space.

And then his Resurrection on Easter morning truly is his triumph and our triumph over all those barriers.



*The Resurrection – an Easter scene in stained glass in Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin
(photo: Patrick Comerford)*

Thomas Francis Meagher Flag Week

In the week leading up to St Patrick's Day, the Thomas Francis Meagher Foundation again supported secondary schools throughout the country by providing 'Flag Week' fundraising packs. These include lapel badges and other materials for use to initiate their own fundraising campaigns for their chosen good cause, and to support the work of Ceann Comhairle Sean O Feargail's Trocaire project in northern Ethiopia.

The Thomas F. Meagher Foundation was established to promote pride in and respect for the Irish Flag and its meaning for peace, by encouraging the young people of Ireland, irrespective of ethnicity, creed or gender, to work together under the Irish Tricolour to proclaim and live its message of peace and unity and to celebrate the new broader inclusive definition of Irishness. Schools were also invited to produce a video of their Flag Week activities supporting the Foundations message.

Writing in the Irish Independent's recent supplement 'The People's Flag', Foundation Chair Rev Michael Cavanagh, Priest-in-charge of the Kenmare and Dromod Union, described the work of the Foundation and its vision:



Ceann Comhairle Sean O'Fearhail and Revd Michael Cavanagh with a student from Schull Community College, one of last year's Foundation Scholarship winners

A FLAG FOR IRELAND

On 7 March 1848, Thomas Meagher raised the colours of Green, Orange and White – flying the Tricolour that is now our National Flag. His dream was that "Beneath its folds the hands of the Irish Catholic and the Irish Protestant may be clasped in generous and heroic brotherhood." The purpose of the Thomas F Meagher Foundation is to help and support that dream, and the dreams of all who have followed his example. Today, the symbolism of the Tricolour speaks louder than ever – not now constrained by religious belief, but encompassing all the people of Ireland, whatever their creed, culture, ethnicity or gender.

Irish influence has reached far beyond its shores – wherever we travel, Irish songs and poetry are heard; Irish values of welcome and hospitality are proclaimed; and the history of the Irish struggle for freedom gives inspiration to those still suffering oppression and foreign control. But we cannot be a country living on the stories of its past, neither can we allow the external pressures of a world of

increasing commercialisation and self-centredness to dictate how we live our lives, turning the sparkling colours of the Tricolour into a dull and uniform greyness.

Throughout 2016, we commemorated those who, throughout the last century – and for many years before – fought and gave their lives to claim the independence which is the birthright of Irishmen and Irishwomen. The world in which we live has changed much over the years, but the aspiration is the same. In the Ireland of the 21st century, we seek equality and justice; respect between those of many different faiths and none; an end to prejudice of whatever kind; and most importantly, a country in which our children and our children's children can grow in body, mind and spirit, learning from each other and contributing to their local, national and international communities. Our flag now symbolises a broader and more inclusive view of citizenship between the all the New Irish – a wonderful kaleidoscope of people who offer both traditional and new contributions to our national heritage.

As part of the 2016 Commemorations, and in partnership with Government and the Defence Services, the Thomas Meagher Foundation presented schools throughout the country with an Irish flag that had been flown from 33 The Mall, Waterford – from where Meagher had raised the first Tricolour. Later in the year, students across the country read from the 1916 Proclamation – and one of the most moving aspects of both events was that they brought young people from many different birth nations together under the Green Orange and White, emphasising the message of togetherness of which those colours are a lasting symbol, and oblivious to any difference between them. As schools across the country raise money for charities of their choice on Flag Day 2017, they bring alive the Tricolour's message of Pride, Respect and Peace – Mórtas, Meas agus Síocháin.

Meagher once said that 'A National flag is the most sacred thing a nation can possess'. The central white panel proclaims our desire for a lasting peace and unity within our Nation – a truly sacred hope – and while we have come far, the ideals of the Proclamation – ideals of Equality Respect and Peace – have still to be fully realised. Bringing them to reality is down to us. We are those now living in the time to be, and its terrible beauty is ours to nourish and to grow.



The 2017 Flag pin used by schools to raise funds for charities of their choosing and to promote Pride in and respect for the Irish flag and its meaning for peace

Lenten Quiet Day in Tuam Cathedral

Report by Joc Sanders, Nenagh Union



At the Tuam Quiet Day (l-r) Robert Cooke, Bishop Kenneth, David Tough, Margaret Groves, Dean Gary and Valerie Kinsella

A Lenten Quiet Day was held in St Mary's Cathedral, Tuam on 9th March for clergy and readers from both Tuam, Killala & Achonry and Limerick & Killaloe dioceses. The day began with the Eucharist, and was led by Rt Rev Richard Henderson on the theme of Jesus's 40 days in the wilderness, a model for Lent. He spoke about his own personal experience of wilderness in his recent health issues – much improved now, thank God. It was in the wilderness that Jesus learned how to recognise and defeat evil, he said, which laid the foundation for his future ministry. Mark tells us that after his baptism the Spirit threw Jesus out into the wilderness – and of course the Spirit accompanied him there. In a sense Jesus's whole ministry is compressed into that period in the desert. At +Richard's suggestion we meditated in silence on baptism and wilderness. The day was valuable not just for its spiritual content, but for bringing clergy and readers from the neighbouring dioceses together. Thanks are due to the organisers, to Bishop Richard, and to those who provided refreshments and a delicious lunch.

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Killaloe Diocese

Killaloe & Stradbally Union of Parishes

Killaloe, Castleconnell, Clonlara, Mountshannon and Tuamgraney.

Rector & Dean: The Very Rev. Gary Paulsen

The Deanery, Abbey Road, Killaloe, Co. Clare

Tel: 061-374 779

Mob: 085-764 0533

Email: abbeydean2@gmail.com

The World Day of Prayer service was held this year on 10 March at St Flannan's Cathedral. As has become the custom the Transition Year students from our local secondary school, St Anne's, played an important role at the service. Veronica Sheahan who is the chaplain at St Anne's coordinates the students and gets them to dress up with costumes each year. They also had three girls dance up the aisle at the beginning of the service bringing in the symbols of fruit, water and rice. Veronica also led us this year in a wonderful reflection on the theme as laid out for women in the Philippines. Diana played the organ along with the students who came along with keyboard, violin, accordion. The students lead the singing beautifully. The ladies of the parish prepared a wonderful feast afterward. Our thanks to everyone involved in this annual event, especially to the scholars of St Anne's who put in so much effort each year.

ST PATRICK'S DAY

As usual we had our St Patrick's Day Eucharist in the Cathedral. Not many turned up this year but the weather was not the best. The Killaloe-Ballina St Patrick's Day Parade followed at 2.30 across the bridge from Ballina and up the main street in Killaloe. Those taking part carried on despite awful weather this year. Bryan and the team rang the bells as they usually do as the procession crosses the

Shannon toward the cathedral. A very touching tribute was paid this year when the Coast Guard members were in the parade. We all kept a minute of silence as we remembered the tragedy of a helicopter crash off the coast of Co Mayo, in which Captain Dara Fitzpatrick died and three others still missing. These men and women give so much of themselves and it was fitting that the people applauded them for their work.

The Clare Drama Festival had an evening celebrating 70 years of drama in Scarrif. This year's 70th drama festival starts on 23 March until 1st April. Our church warden Gina Sparling chairs this committee and has been involved in the festival for many years. We wish them well and long may it last.

Our two candidates for confirmation this year are Hazel Butler and Will Kearns. Please keep them and their families in your prayers as they prepare for confirmation in May.

The 'Joy of Bells' initiative at Waterford's Cathedral on March 19th in protest at anti-immigrant sentiment was rung at Killaloe in response to a request by Dean of Waterford, Maria Jansson. The bells were rung in opposition to the fear being generated toward immigrants and refugees, as our Christian calling is to love one another. The call of the bells reminds us of our vocation as followers of Christian way.



St Flannan's Bellring Team, (plus the camera man!)

Birr Group of Parishes

Birr, Lorrha, Lockeen, and Dorrha

Rector: The Venerable R. Wayne Carney

Archdeacon of Killaloe & Clonfert

The Rectory, Birr, Co. Offaly

Tel: 057 912 0021 Mob: 087 786 5234

Email: mapleire@gmail.com

Parish Facebook: www.facebook.com/BirrGroupOfParishes

PRAYERS

We are delighted that Deirdre Dickson and Lord Rosse have recovered from illnesses requiring recent stays in hospital. We keep Betty Delahunt, Diane Dagg, and Anne Gill in our prayers, along with baby Saoirse in Australia, granddaughter of Whitten and Linda Gill. We also offer our condolences to June Powell, following the death of her brother - Bob Bennett.

BIRR CHURCHES TOGETHER

Our Lenten ecumenical endeavour with presentations on the similarities and differences among Roman Catholic, Methodist, and Church of Ireland beliefs and practices has been postponed, hopefully to the autumn. Instead, we have been having "A Quiet Time of Prayer and Reflective Music", in Birr Methodist Church, each Tuesday, from 8 to 9 pm. The last one will be held on Tuesday, 4th April. Many thanks to Claudia Meium, co-ordinator of Birr Churches Together.

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FAMILY EUCHARIST AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our monthly Family Eucharist continues on the second Sunday of the month, with 'Perplex the Preacher'. The children have to bring in objects to show the Archdeacon, who has to tell them how the object reminds him of God. This has been getting increasingly 'perplexing', as our younger parishioners have become more and more ingenious in what they choose to bring in – such as a mud-covered knee! It has also been good to have so many of our young people taking part in the service in so many ways. Many thanks to June Pyle for looking after the refreshments after the service. Sunday School continues on the third Sunday of the month.

CONFIRMATION

A reminder that the Confirmation Service will be held in Birr on Sunday, 18th June at 11:30 am. Any young people of at least 12 years old who want to confirm their Baptismal vows and make a sincere commitment to follow Jesus should contact the Archdeacon. Time and place for Confirmation classes will be announced soon. It is hoped that candidates would also be prepared to attend the Diocesan Confirmation Weekend, to be held on the 2nd to the 5th of June.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Sunday, 9th April – Palm Sunday

Birr 11:30 am Procession of the Palms and Family Eucharist

Monday, 10th April – Monday in Holy Week

Dorrha, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist

Tuesday, 11th April – Tuesday in Holy Week

Lorrha, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist

Wednesday, 12th April – Wednesday in Holy Week

Lockeen, 8:00 pm, Holy Eucharist

Thursday, 13th April – Maundy Thursday

Birr Methodist, 7:30 pm, Holy Eucharist (celebrated by the Archdeacon)

Friday, 14th April – Good Friday

(Joint Service with the Methodist parishioners)

Birr, 12:00 noon, Our Lord's Passion

Saturday, 15th April – Easter Eve

Lorrha, 9:00 pm, New Fire, Easter Vigil, and First Holy Eucharist of Easter with Bishop Kenneth

Sunday, 16th April – Easter Day

Lockeen, 9:30 am, Holy Eucharist

Birr, 11:30 am, Holy Eucharist

Roscrea Group of Parishes

Roscrea, Bourney, Corbally and Kyle

Rector: Canon Jane Galbraith

St. Cronan's Rectory, Rosemount, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, E53X466

Tel: 0505 21725 Mob: 087 382 5336

Email: galbraithjane@gmail.com

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:

Christ Church Corbally 9.30 ;

St. Cronan's 10.45;

St. Burchin Bourney. 12. noon.

St. Molua Kyle (12. noon 1st and 3rd. only)

Heartiest Congratulations to Mrs. Edith Rafter on celebrating her 90th. birthday. It is Mrs. Rafter who can teach the younger ones so much about Sunday witness, among very many other things; not least how to keep warm in church.

Congratulations to Harry and Fan Hodgins and their family on the photograph shared recently and on display in town, a poignant and superb family group. How good to see Harry looking so well. The photograph was in celebration of sixty years of marriage 30-10-1963 at 11.00 am in Templeberry and afterwards at The Carmel Hotel.

Congratulations to Clive and Mary Davis on the arrival of baby daughter Rebecca and a sister for big brother James, aged 2 years.

Congratulations to Clive and Ciara Allen on the arrival of Christian, a baby brother for Cameron and grandson to Iris Allen.

Welcome into the Church family Fia Tilly Pearson who was baptized on Saturday February 25th. a little sister to John and Josh and granddaughter to Ruth and daughter to Gillian.



Fia Tilly with Canon Jane and her family and Godparents

Welcome back to Roscrea and to Villa Maria Nursing Home to Ruby Dann. It is great news to hear Ruby is back in the parish environs once more, enabling lots more visiting.

Palm Cross Making Workshop Sat. April 8th. 3.00p.m. The Rectory. ... fingers large and small, all are welcome.

HOLY WEEK SERVICE SCHEDULE

Monday: Evening Prayer St. Molua's Kyle 7.00pm. (obstinate heating system set for Sunday worshippers! So bring a hot water bottle if desired... If our ninety year olds can, younger ones can also do so.)

Tuesday: Evening Prayer St. Cronan's Roscrea 2.30 pm.

Wednesday: Evening Prayer with Tennebrae Christ Church Corbally 7.00pm

Thursday: Holy Communion St. Burchin's Bourney 7.00pm.

Good Friday: St. Cronan's am Ecumenical Walk of Witness time tba. 7.00pm Evening Service

Saturday: Easter Vigil and lighting of all Paschal Candles of our Group. Time tba. (dusk)

Easter Day Holy Communion every church, (except St. Molua's Kyle.) Christ Church Corbally 9.15.

EASTER SPECIAL SCAVENGER HUNT: Scheduled for Easter Week Wednesday time tba. This is for children and their friends. Venue Christ Church Corbally. More details nearer the time.

UNITED SERVICE for Roscrea Group of Parishes with The Methodist Church Roscrea SUNDAY APRIL 30TH. There will be no other service in Roscrea Group of Parishes that day.

ECUMENICAL WEDNESDAY SERVICES are shared with our four denominations. Special speakers have been from Simon Midlands where we learnt the different needs of the rural homeless. Then we heard about Age Friendly and that following Dundalk Roscrea is a prominent force in this European initiative, under the leadership

of Anne Keevy. This emphasises that when even one or two things change for the better in shops or other public buildings or spaces to suit the Third Age (ie retired people), it will always be a good change for all ages. Wednesday April 5th 8.00 topic Cyber bullying.

CHRISTIAN AID WALK Advanced Notice Saturday May 27th. Slieve Bloom Hikes. A family walk or and a more experienced hiker hike. Starting point Clonaslee Community Centre, Co.Laois. Start collecting sponsorship now.

Nenagh Union of Parishes

Nenagh, Templederry, Ballymackey and Killodiernan

Rector: Rev Rod Smyth

The Rectory, Church Rd, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

Tel: 067 32598, Mob: 087 970 6479

Email: rsmyth6582@btinternet.com

The season of Lent began in the Nenagh Union on Ash Wednesday with a service of the Liturgy of Ash Wednesday including the imposition of ashes. The theme of the service was to see Lent as a time for considering our own interiority, who we are before God, and an attempt to see Lent as a time for our own spiritual spring cleaning. Not as something negative, the giving up of something, but rather as a positive thing, reading the Archbishop of Canterbury's book for Lent, attending the mid-week Eucharist or being part of the Pilgrim Course.

During the season of Lent parishioners are meeting together on Thursday evenings to follow part six of the Pilgrim Course, The Eucharist. This course, written by amongst others, Bishop Stephen Cottrell and the theologian Paula Goodyear, is designed to help individuals discover the Christian way of life. It is a course which is reflective and conversational. There are six sessions and each session contains a theme, opening prayers, a conversation starter, an opportunity to reflect on a reading from Scripture through the discipline of Lectio Divina, a short reflection on the theme from a contemporary Christian writer, some questions to address together, a 'journeying on' session and some closing prayers. Finally, there are selected quotations from the great tradition of Christian writing to aid further reflection. A small but faithful band of parishioners have been enjoying being together to think and reflect on their faith and to ask questions in a non-threatening atmosphere of mutual support.

The United Family service this month was held in Templederry Parish Church. Benjamin Mulligan read the Old Testament reading about God telling Moses to strike the rock at Horeb, out of which water poured so that the people could drink. The game of rock, scissors and paper was used in the address to ask the question, what do you mean you can't get water out of that rock?

On Mothering Sunday there were small posies of flowers available for each lady in the church. These were blessed and then distributed by the children along with a Mothering Sunday bookmark. The sermon reflected on Mary waiting at the cross, just as all mothers wait – waiting at the beginning of life during pregnancy, waiting for the child to go to school, waiting for sleep to descend, or waiting at the bedside of a sick child. This is reflected in our own waiting on God

Cloughjordan & Borrisokane Group of Parishes

Cloughjordan, Borrisokane, Borrisnafarney and Ballingarry.

Rector: Rev Terry Mitchell

Modreeny Rectory, Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary

Tel: 0505 42183

Mob: 087 203 9333

Email: terrym438@gmail.com

On behalf of Borrisokane Church of Ireland and the wider community, we extend our condolences to the Hayes family on the death of Willie Hayes on the 9th of March. The funeral service was held at Borrisokane on the 12th March with both the previous Incumbents, Canon Ruth Gill and Canon Stephen Neil being in attendance. Our prayers and thoughts are with the family at this time.

Bishop Kenneth visited the Cloughjordan and Borrisokane Group of Parishes on the 5th of March as he celebrated Holy Communion at Borrisnafarney and Morning Prayer at St Kieran's, Cloughjordan. He spoke to us of God's work of creation and our redemption in Christ. We were also challenged to pray each day during, particularly this season of Lent. His visit was appreciated by all those who attended either of the two services and we look forward to welcoming him back for the Confirmation Services on the 14th of May.

Please remember to hold in your prayers those preparing themselves for confirmation this year. We are using the Confirmation Resource, Believe, produced by the Church of Ireland Youth Department. It covers a variety of relevant topics over a 12 week period, with valuable resource material for the Course Leader and a handbook for the confirmands.

The mid-week Lenten Services will continue until the 5th of April and meet on Wednesday evenings at Roscrea Methodist Church, starting at 8:00pm. The topics will address social issues prevalent in our communities including homelessness, issues on aging, addictions, suicide and cyber-bullying in the teenage years. All are welcome.

Lent and Holy Week services. On the 13th of April there will be a United Maundy Thursday Service in St Kieran's, Cloughjordan at 8:00pm and we will be joined by the Community Choir.

On Friday the 14th April there will be an afternoon ecumenical procession in Cloughjordan, with the usual Easter Sunday services on the 16th of April.

A Combined Service of Worship will be held with the Methodist Church in Borrisokane, on the 30th April at 10:15am.

Congratulations to Mark and Emma Crawford upon the occasion of the baptism of Eanna on the 19th March at the parish of Borrisnafarney. It was a lovely opportunity for all of us to share in this service with them and their families.

GFS will be holding a Diocesan Service on Borrisokane Church on Saturday the 1st of April at 2:30pm. The first enrolment service was held in the Church and the GFS will be celebrating 50 years in the Diocese. Tea will be served in the Hall after the service.

Congratulations to Patricia Evans who celebrated her 90th birthday on the 17th March. Friends and families gathered to celebrate this special day with her.

Shinrone Group of Parishes

Shinrone, Aghancon, Kinnitty and Dunkerrin

Rector: Canon Michael Johnston (On sick leave)

Parish Website: shinrone.blogspot.ie

Priest-in-Charge: The Revd. Canon Ruth Gill

Kilgolan House, Kilcormac, Birr, Co. Offaly

Phone: 05791 35341: email: ruth_gill40@outlook.ie

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

Maundy Thursday, 13th April: Holy Communion in Aghancon at 8p.m.

Good Friday, 14th April: Devotional Service in Shinrone at 8p.m.

Easter Day. All services will be Holy Communion:

Dunkerrin at 9 a.m.

Kinnitty at 10 a.m.

Shinrone at 10.30 a.m.

Aghancon at 11.30 a.m.

PASTORAL

It's good to see Mrs. Jackson and Mrs. Wallace both home again after some time in hospital. They are wished every blessing on their road to recovery.

CONGRATULATIONS

Best wishes to Matthew Hives and Davina Meredith on the recent announcement of their engagement.

MOTHERS' UNION

Members enjoyed a lovely evening at Bramber Studios with Hazel Greene where they were joined by neighbouring Branches. Many thanks Hazel!

The Branch circulated a quiz which was well supported and nearly every question was answered correctly. The four questions that caused entrants to scratch their heads were: "These will keep your hands dry while washing up" Answer: Marigolds. "..... can make a walk painful" Answer: Acorn. "A little water for Lillian!" Answer: Pond Lily. And finally, "A man from the Polders doesn't want to see these!" Dutchman's Breeches.

QUIET DAY

There was a Quiet Day hosted by Tuam & Killala Dioceses and clergy and readers from Limerick & Killaloe were invited to join them. Richard Henderson led the reflections, spending some time accompanying Jesus on his journey in the wilderness, which came directly after his baptism and prepared him for his ministry. He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant. How does our baptism prepare us for our wilderness times? It was a very thoughtful and thought provoking occasion. See page 21.

Drumcliffe Union with Kilnasoolagh

Ennis, Kilfenora, Kilkee, Spanish Point, Kilnasoolagh and Shannon

Rector: Rev. Chancellor Robert Charles Hanna

The Rectory, Bindon Street, Ennis, Co. Clare.

Tel: 065 - 6820109 Mob: 086 2167040

Email: bobhanna@eircom.net

Parish website: www.churchofirelandclare.com

The 2016 FORWARD TOGETHER report will shape the tenor of our two Easter Vestries (AGMs) after the Linney-Hyland dialogue with chosen diocesan parishes, all parishes and their leaders are on call to take seriously deep reflection about our position, makeup and resources within the church and diocese and society.

Such gatherings are moments of recollection and thanksgiving for the faithful service fulfilled by our church officers and members who so exemplify by their service the community of the Spirit. Yet, it would appear that for all that, fresh thinking and greater focus is needed to stem the on-going loss of personnel and financial income.

May an enhanced gathering of parishioners get to see the Report as a basis of creative discussion and action to be the Church Militant under Christ's Spirit.

HOLY WEEK will take its customary form with lunchtime devotions based around Passiontide Narratives and readings at 1.00pm, followed by light lunch at 1.20pm, Monday-Thursday.

These will be read by representatives of the wider community

GOOD FRIDAY Noon sees WORDS FROM THE CROSS with a Reflection from a guest speaker.

The Rector wishes to thank Dean (Emeritus) Maurice Sirr for pastoring the parish in his absence during two weeks of Lent including leading the Lenten study programme entitled "God's heart for Migrants, Biblical Wisdom for a world in turmoil", written by David Shepherd. This was excellent material for Lenten learning, where students of the word saw how the Migrant - the outsider, alien, journeyman - formed a significant part of God's salvation history.

VISITORS

It was a great pleasure to have in a visit to us at Kilnasoolagh recently, former parishioners Mark and Cathy Munday who now live in Oxfordshire.

MARRIAGE

St Columba's Drumcliffe will be the venue on Saturday 6th May for the marriage of John Monaghan an architect from Sligo Town and Lisa Fearon, a tourism director in Sligo, with Clare connections. The Rector will officiate and Mr Nigel Bridge will play the organ. We wish them rich blessings.

SECURITY

Drumcliffe Vestry are installing extra floodlighting in the church and rectory grounds with a view to enhancing security. The Rectory was broken into a year ago.

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Clonfert Diocese

Aughrim & Creagh Unions of Parishes

Aughrim, Ballinasloe, Ahascragh, Ardrahan, Clontuskert and Woodlawn

Rector: Rev. John Godfrey

The Rectory, Aughrim, Co. Galway.

Tel: 090 967 3735 Mob: 087 900 8085

Email: reverendjohngodfrey@gmail.com

Parish website: www.aughrim.clonfert.anglican.org

On Saturday 1st April at 3pm a memorial service will be held in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim for Robert Cooke senior, who died in Australia on February 24th, just a fortnight after the death of his brother Cecil. Our continued thoughts and prayers are with the Cooke family.

Patrick Louchlann Rochfort Hyde (Louchlann), was baptised in Holy Trinity Church on March 12th. Congratulations to his parents Simon and Elaine, his brother Donacha and to all in the Hyde and Faulkner families.

Jack Benjamin Sheppard was baptized in St Matthew's Church Clontuskert (Glan) on March 18th. We wish every blessing to his parents Damian and Niamh, his big brother Noah, and to everyone in the Sheppard and Riddell households.



Baptism of Jack Sheppard in Glan Church

March 12th saw the launch of a new monthly Family Service in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim. There was much fun and excitement, with action songs, stories and family-friendly prayers and readings. Teenage musician Nicole Cruise led the music in church for the first time ever, playing the guitar and keyboard. Sincere thanks to all who went out of their way to support this new initiative. Family services will continue on the second Sunday of the month in Aughrim at 11.30, so Holy Communion will now move to the third Sunday of the month, whilst Morning Prayer will continue as usual on the first and fourth Sundays.



Family Service- Holy Trinity Aughrim



Family Service

Our new Bible study group, 'Praying into Lent' is underway on Tuesday evenings in the Rectory Coach House. Using the form of daily prayer suggested in Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge, we are reading, discussing and praying through the Bible readings for the upcoming Sunday in Lent. Sometimes reading scripture prompts all sorts of ideas and questions to rattle around our heads: the idea of this group is to create a safe space where those ideas and questions can 'rattle out loud,' without having to sound clever or come up with the right answers!

Congratulations to the dedicated team in St Catherine's Church, Ahascragh who hosted a St Patrick's Day dance in Clinton's Lounge, with music from Midnight Melodies, refreshments and a raffle. The event was well supported by the local community and raised €900 towards the upkeep of the church. Well done indeed!

Our sincere thanks go to the team involved in the Aughrim Development Scheme for all their work in renovating and redecorating the Rectory Coach House. We are very grateful that our parish hall is now so much warmer and brighter.

St Nicholas' Parish, Galway continue to dovetail with us on a number of parish social events. On March 12th we had a joint parish walk around Coole Park and on April 29th we will come together for a Teddy Bear's Picnic in Turoe Pet Farm, near Loughrea.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Palm Sunday (April 9th) Holy Communion in St John's Ballinasloe at 10am; Family Service in Holy Trinity Aughrim at 11.30am; Morning Prayer in St Catherine's Ahascragh at midday.

Maundy Thursday (April 13th) we will celebrate the Washing of the Feet and the Institution of the Last Supper in Holy Trinity Church Aughrim at 7.30pm.

Good Friday (April 14th) outdoor ecumenical Way of the Cross services at midday in Ballinasloe and at 7pm in Ardrahan.

Easter Day (April 16th) Holy Communion in St John's Ballinasloe at 11am (United Service), followed by a children's Easter Egg hunt.

On April 30th (fifth Sunday) St Matthew's Church Clontuskert (Glan) will host a united family service at 11am.



Clonfert Group of Parishes

Clonfert, Banagher, Eyrecourt, and Portumna

Vacant

Priest in Charge: Very Rev. Patrick L. Towers

Tel: (090) 9684547. Mob: (086) 8140649

Email: towers.patrick@gmail.com

THE PARISH CIRCULAR OF THE PRECEDING MONTH

Holy Baptism: In Christ Church, Portumna on Mothering Sunday Jack Gerard Woolley was baptised. Jack is the son of Elaine and Eoin Woolley. The Godparents were Steven Lynch and Mary Claire Woolley. Elaine, née Lynch, is a School Teacher in Oxmantown School, Birr. We welcome Jack into the Church.

Death: Eileen Jamieson of Canal House, Banagher, passed away on March 4th and her funeral took place in St Paul's, Banagher. Our sympathies are extended to the Clarke family, other relatives and Eileen's friends.

Women's World Day of Prayer was held in Clonfert Church with many women in attendance. It was a both a moving service and a fine one. The male priests of the Church of Ireland and the Roman Catholic Church were the only adult males present which gave one a very pleasant glimpse of a church with only women present. I hasten to add that the two males present played only token parts. The male singing was muted and the absence of uber-enthusiastic male voices only added to the quiet solemnity of the evening.

A Cake Sale was held for the upkeep of the Moystown Churchyard. Moystown Church is a 'ruin' with its roof removed and its onetime loveliness has only to be imagined. But its setting in the townland of Moystown close to the Shannon and near the town of Belmont is most pleasant. The graveyard is well kept by the Church of Ireland folk and it is a really neat place to visit under a "Discover Hidden Ireland" day out. The Cake Sale brought in close to €900. The nearby ruined Tisaran Church and Churchyard are also really look worth a visit.

FUTURE PARISH SERVICES AND EVENTS

HOLY WEEK & EASTER

PALM SUNDAY Portumna at 10am (Please note this earlier time as the Service will be slightly longer than usual) Banagher at 12noon.

WEDNESDAY Eliza Lodge Parish Communion at 11am

MAUNDY THURSDAY Eyrecourt at 7pm

GOOD FRIDAY Bandager at 11am

SATURDAY Portumna Vigil Service at 7pm (1st Eucharist of Easter)

EASTER DAY Holy Eucharists Eyrecourt at 10.30. Banagher at 12noon

Limerick Diocese

Limerick City Parish

St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Michael's and Abington Churches

Dean: Vacant

Priest-in-charge: Rev Edna Wakely

50 Ballinvoher, Fr Russell Road, Dooradoyle, Limerick

Tel: 061 302 038, Mob: 086 357 4917

Email: ednawakely@hotmail.com

BEREAVEMENTS

24 February – Louise Wilson (Cork) – our deepest sympathy to her twin sister, Sadie Williams, together with the extended family and friends.

27 February – Amelia Fitzell (Listowel) – our deepest sympathy to her daughter Elizabeth Hanley, together with the extended family and friends.

ST. MARY'S CATHEDRAL NEWS

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

Wednesday 5th April – Helen Houlihan (soprano), Peter Sebestyen (cello). Music by Spohr and Brahms.

Wednesday 12th April – Emma English (soprano) and colleagues from LSOM

Concerts take place at 1.15pm and admission is free

HOLY WEEK – There will be services of Holy Communion on Monday – Thursday inclusive, at 7.30 am in St. Mary's Cathedral, followed by breakfast.

Maundy Thursday 13th April, 7.30pm Tenebrae & Footwashing with Holy Communion

Good Friday Service, 14th April 12 noon

EASTER SUNDAY – Holy Communion in St. Michael's Church at 10 am; Holy Communion – Rite 2 in St. Mary's Cathedral at 11.15am and Holy Communion in Abington Church at 12 noon.

BOOK LAUNCH

A new publication on Michael Hogan, the celebrated Bard of Thomond called "The Last Dalcassian Bard" – Michael Hogan Bard of Thomond (1826-1899) by Christopher Power of Arklow will be presented to the public in St. Mary's Cathedral on Friday 21st April at 7.30pm.

WHIST DRIVES

These are now taking a break until October.

THE LIMERICK PASSION PLAY, ST. MARYS CATHEDRAL, SATURDAY APRIL 8TH 2017 @ 8PM. ADMISSION FREE. RETIRING COLLECTION.

This performance is aiming to integrate Irish and Polish people through music. It is being organised in cooperation with a multi-person team

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associated with the "Polish Theatre in Limerick", "Cantate Deo Choir", Saturday Polish School of Janusz Korczak and the Polish Chaplaincy. The aim of the Cantate Deo choir's performances is to integrate the Polish and Irish communities through music. Last year the Cantate Deo choir performed alongside the Limerick Gospel Choir, demonstrating the integration of people through music.

We are honoured that this year they have chosen St. Mary's Cathedral because of its wonderful medieval interior.

The performance will be free of charge and all the actors, singers and musicians, are performing free of charge. They just want as many people as possible to come and see the performance and to listen to the amazing music.

Adare and Kilmallock Group of Parishes

Adare, Croom, Kilmallock & Kilpeacon

Rector: Canon Liz Beasley

The Rectory, Adare, Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 396227 Mob: 087-7199750

Email: revlizadare@gmail.com

At this writing, we are nearing the middle of Lent and getting ready for Mothering Sunday, that day of refreshment on the fourth Sunday in Lent. During this season, about 15 of us have been focusing on learning about the Psalms. We have learned about the different types of psalms in the Bible and how they were used in worship in biblical times. We have also focused on how we might use them in our own prayers, both as individuals and in our churches.

FAREWELL IN CHRIST

We offer our condolences to the Long family on the death of Bernie Long, wife of Ronnie Long, on Thursday, 26 January. We also approach the year's anniversary of the death of Norman Long, Ronnie's brother, and a member of the Kilpeacon Church. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Long family throughout this time.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Once again, we will have a service or event each day during Holy Week, the week during which we remember the arrest and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Below is the schedule of services:

Palm Sunday, 9 April: Holy Communion in Kilmallock and Adare; Morning Prayer in Croom and Kilpeacon

Monday, 10 April, 8.00pm: Tenebrae service in Croom. In this service, we move from light to darkness, as candles are gradually extinguished.

Tuesday, 11 April, 8.00pm: A service of Evening Prayer, with an emphasis on singing hymns of Lent and Holy Week.

Wednesday, 12 April, 8.00pm: Psalms class meeting at the Rectory.

Thursday, 13 April, 8.00pm: Maundy Thursday service

Friday, 14 April:

Children's Service: Kilpeacon, 10.00am

Kilmallock, 12.30pm

Adare, 7.00pm (This is a change from previous years.)

Saturday, 15 April: Easter Vigil in Kilmallock, 8.00pm

Sunday, 16 April:

Croom, Holy Communion, 8.45am

Kilmallock, Morning Prayer, 10.00am

Kilpeacon, Holy Communion, 10.15am

Adare, Holy Communion, 12.15am

All are invited and encouraged to come to the Easter Vigil in Kilmallock on Saturday evening. This is the most important service of the whole Christian year. By candlelight, we remember the deeds of God in history to save humanity and we renew baptismal vows.

Then in the light, we celebrate the resurrection of Christ and receive Holy Communion. Experiencing the Easter Vigil can help people understand the whole Christian faith.

EASTER VESTRY

Again, we announce that the Easter Vestry will be held on 23 April, the Second Sunday of Easter. We will have one joint service in Adare at 11.00am. This will be followed by a joint Easter Vestry meeting in the church. We will do this for several reasons: to have the chance for all of us to be together in worship, to enable more people to come to Easter Vestry than might show up on a weekday evening, and to elect together our Parish Nominators, as this is the year we must do this.

Our photo this month is of the children of St. Nicholas N.S. on the day before St. Patrick's Day, prepared to celebrate with a variety of activities during the day!



St Nicholas' students getting ready for St Patrick's Day.

Rathkeale & Kilnaughtin Group of Parishes

Rathkeale, Askeaton, Kilcornan & Kilnaughtin

Priest-in-Charge: Rev Canon Patrick Comerford

The Rectory, Askeaton, Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 398647, Mob: 087 663 5116

Email: revpatrickcomerford@gmail.com

SUNDAYS IN APRIL:

26 March: 9.45, Castletown, MP; 11.15, Rathkeale, HC.

2 April: 9.45, Askeaton, HC, 11.15, Kilnaughtin HC.

9 April (Palm Sunday): Castletown, HC; 11.15, Rathkeale, MP.

16 April (Easter Day): 9 a.m., Saint Brendan's Church, Kilnaughtin; 10.30 a.m., Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton; 12 noon: Holy Trinity Church, Rathkeale.

23 April: 9.45 Castletown, MP; 11.15, Rathkeale, MP.

30 April: United Service, 11 a.m., Castletown; 7.30 p.m., Askeaton, Evening Prayer.

MONDAYS IN LENT: BISHOP KENNETH'S LENT CHALLENGE:

On Monday evenings in Lent, at 8 p.m. in the Rectory, Askeaton, you are invited to follow Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge. Copies of Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge are available in the churches and in Newslink.

SCHOOL CAKE SALE:

The School Cake School is taking place in Rathkeale No 2 National School on Friday 7 April before the school closes for Easter.

HOLY WEEK (SUNDAY 9 APRIL TO GOOD FRIDAY 14 APRIL):

9 April (Palm Sunday): Castletown, HC; 11.15, Rathkeale, MP.
There will be a united service in one church at 8 p.m. each evening during Holy Week:

- Monday 10 April: Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton.
- Tuesday 11 April: Saint Brendan's Church, Kilnaughtin.
- Wednesday 12 April: Holy Trinity Church, Rathkeale.
- Maundy Thursday, 13 April: Castletown Church.
- Good Friday, 14 April: Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton.

In addition, there is a one-hour Ecumenical Service on the theme of 'Waiting Around the Cross' in Saint Mary's Church (RC), Rathkeale, at 12 noon on Good Friday.

THE EASTER EUCHARIST:

- Easter Eve, 15 April: 8 p.m., Castletown Church.
- Easter Day, 16 April: 9 a.m., Saint Brendan's Church, Kilnaughtin.
10.30 a.m., Saint Mary's Church, Askeaton.
12 noon: Holy Trinity Church, Rathkeale.

FIFTH SUNDAY, UNITED SERVICE:

There are five Sundays in April, and on the Fifth we have had a united service for the group of parishes.
30 April: United Service, 11 a.m., Castletown; 7.30 p.m., Askeaton, Evening Prayer.

EASTER VESTRIES (8 P.M., THE RECTORY):

- Monday 24 April: Rathkeale.
- Tuesday 25 April: Askeaton and Castletown.
- Wednesday 26 April: Trabert, Kilnaughtin.

This is the year for triennial elections, so these meetings have a particular importance this year.



...well your sermon on the theme of 'Life under President Trump' seems to have gone down very well, vicar...

Ardfert Diocese

Tralee & Dingle Unions of Parishes

Tralee, Ballymacelligott, Ballyseedy, Dingle, Kilgobbin and Killiney

Vacant

Email: tralee@ireland.anglican.org

Priest-in-Charge: Rev Phyllis Jones,
The Rectory, Camp, Co. Kerry.

Tel: 066 713 0767 Mob: 085 855 8594

Email: phyllisjones@eircom.net

Date	Ballys'dy 9.45 am	Tralee 10.45 am	Ballymac 12 noon	Kilgobbin 10.00 am	Dingle 12 noon
2nd April	HC	HC	MP	MP	MP
Palm Sunday 9th April	MP	MP	MP	HC	HC
Monday of Holy Week	8.00pm Eve Prayer				
Tuesday of Holy Week	8.00pm Eve Prayer				
Wednesday of Holy Week	8.00pm Eve Prayer				
Maundy Thursday		8.00pm HC			
Good Friday		1.00pm Devotional	8.00pm Devotional	3.00pm Devotional	
Easter Eve Vigil	7.00pm HC				
Easter Day 16th April	No Service	HC	Comm. by Extension	HC	HC
23rd April	MP	HC	HC	MP	MP
30th April	No Service	MP	No Service	HC	HC

MID-WEEK SERVICES: The services continue every Wednesday at 11.00am in St. John's followed by coffee and fellowship.

CONFIRMATION: The confirmation will be held in Ballymacelligott Church on Sunday 7th May, at 2.30pm. All are warmly invited to come and support the candidates on this special day.

HEALER PRAYER GROUP: The next prayer meeting will be on Tuesday 4th April at 8.00pm in the Parish Centre. Please write the names of those in need of prayer in the Prayer Books, which are provided at the back of each church. All are welcome to join us for the short service and refreshments.

ST. JOHN'S, TRALEE – are planning a 'Gift Day' for Lent, when people are invited to give up something for Lent and to give what has been saved towards the on-going costs of repairs and expenses of the church. Gifts can be handed to the Churchwardens or sent by post to The Treasurer, Phyllis Mason, 42 Highfield Grove, Caherslee, Tralee.

LENT: This year everyone is being encouraged to accept Bishop Kenneth's Lent Challenge and to devote a short time each day to read a passage of scripture, prayer and reflection. This may be alone or together with a friend. Copies of the Order for Daily Prayer, weekly Collect and Scripture readings will be available at the back of each church.

BOYS BRIGADE: The Boys' Brigade has had a fun-filled season so far - read Collete's report on page 8.



1st Tralee Company's Enrollment Day.

LINKS GROUP: We have invited Sylvia Thompson to join us for our meeting on Feb 27th to lead us in reflection, as preparation for Lent. Sylvia is well known for her 'thought for the day' on Radio Kerry and has previously been a popular guest of the Links Ladies.

PRAYER: Lord, let us be a channel of your blessing to others. We do not know how you will use our prayers, but we trust that we may play our part in your healing and redeeming work in the world. Amen.

Killarney and Aghadoe Union of Parishes

Killarney, Aghadoe and Muckross

Rector Ven Simon J. Lumby, Archdeacon of Limerick
The Rectory, Rookery Road, Ballycasheen, Killarney, Co. Kerry.
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EASTER VESTRY APRIL 2ND 2017

This year's Easter Vestry will take place after Sunday Morning Service in St Mary's on April 2nd and it's hoped we've a full turn-out of congregation. Venerable Simon has already spoken of the importance of this year's Vestry as there are a number of critically important roles to be filled. He has also looked for Apprentices - I kid you not - because although some roles are held for many years by the same people and it can appear to the rest of us that they're simple jobs, nothing could be further from the truth. With that in mind, Simon is looking for two people to accept training in both secretarial and treasury roles from the current incumbents; namely Bob Harman and Richard Hilliard. Both Bob and Richard have given many years of trojan service to St Mary's and they've learned a lot and streamlined many processes along the way. What we're now hoping for is for two members of the congregation to step up as assistants to Bob and Richard for a period so as to learn the ropes for the inevitable time when either or both decide they want to play more golf or get a bit more salmon fishing in! We are also looking for a new Peoples' Warden along with other vacancies which need to be filled, so everyone is asked to ask themselves if they are willing to commit a little extra time to the Church for 2017.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY COURSE:

The Migrant Refugee - God's Viewpoint Lenten Bible Study Course is currently in full swing and many people are remarking on how beneficial it is to them in understanding their faith in preparation for Easter. Many others have taken up Bishop Kenneth's Challenge and their lives have been enhanced with a more routine delving into the Bible than they may have been used to. The readings, mostly from John, throughout March were varied and the Collects focussed on themes of Mercy and Grace. With the foregoing in mind, there was

a certain irony in Simon's sermon on March 19th when he reminded church goers at St Mary's that we are all made from the stuff of the Bible; we are made of the star-dust of creation itself and so was Jesus Christ our Redeemer.



Joanna Bauer

JOANNA BAUER IS SETTLING IN:

Joanna's theology ministry university placement with us has commenced and she is settling in well. It will take Joanna very little time to get to know us because she is a very affable and bubbly person and we've taken to her presence amongst us seamlessly.

CONFIRMATION:

Naomi Moore will be confirmed by Bishop Kenneth at St Michael's Church in Killorglin on May 6th next.

All of the congregation are asked to spare a time to pray for Naomi as she prepares for the next step in developing her faith.

AND STILL: THE ORDINARY THINGS MUST BE DONE!

This may seem like a Part 2 for those who read the March edition of Newslink when Mike sent out a rallying call for an external clean-up. However, this month's call is not exclusive for those who volunteered for that because we urgently need to set up an internal cleaning rota as well. With so many daily visitors and so many concerts during the summer, the church can become soiled with debris brought in on shoes, etc., very quickly! As we no longer have a paid cleaner we are attempting to put together a weekly rota for keeping the church presentable for all comers during the week. There was a time in the past when men would look at such a call and think that's not for me because that's women's work, but that ideological viewpoint is - thankfully - long gone. So if anyone has an hour to spare during the week or at the weekend, please contact Simon for a place on the rota. Indeed, it seems to me that if people could double up, not only would the work get done faster, there'd be time for a coffee and chat afterwards. Any takers???

Kilcolman Union of Parishes

Kilcolman, Kiltallagh and Glenbeigh

Vacant

Priest-in-Charge: The Rev Jim Stephens

Kilderry, Milltown, Co. Kerry

Mob: 087 052 9107

Email: stephens.j@temmler.eu or stiofain.s@gmail.com

Web: kilcolman.ardfert.anglican.org

SERVICES

Kiltallagh 9.45 am except the first Sunday at 7pm Holy Communion

HC 1st & 3rd

MP 2nd & 4th

Kilorglin 11.00 pm

HC 2st & 4 rd

MP 1st & 3 rd

SYMPATHY:

Shirley Jones of Tonreigh, Castlemaine passed away on the morning of Ash Wednesday after a short illness. Her death was unexpected and was a big shock to her family. Shirley was a quiet and gentle lady who loved her family, her kitchen and her garden. She will be greatly missed by her husband Dick, her daughters Alison, Gertie and Shirley, her grandchildren, Sarah, Darragh and Katie and her sons in law , Gareth and Evan. She was buried in Kiltallagh after her funeral service in Kiltallagh Church, Castlemaine on Friday the 3rd of March.

CONGRATULATIONS:

To Cole and Fiona Stephens on the birth of their daughter Charlotte. Cole and Fiona live in Cork, Congratulations also to Tim and Susan on becoming grandparents and to Elizabeth Stephens of Kilderry on becoming a great-grand mother.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

The Ash Wednesday service was held in Kiltallagh Church at 12.30 on the First of March and it was led by the pupils of Kiltallagh National School. Many thanks to the Staff in the School who prepared them so well.

HOLY WEEK:

Holy Week services are as follows:

Maundy Thursday Holy Communion in Kiltallagh at 7pm

Good Friday Service in Killorglin Church @ 12noon.

EASTER DAY SERVICES:

Holy Communion in both Churches at the usual times.

KILTALLAGH SCHOOL QUIZ:

This valuable fund raising quiz was held in Griffins Bar, Castlemaine on Thursday the 23rd of March, Well done to all those who organised and supported it.

GLENBEIGH AND GLENCAR.

Congratulation to Leon Seidler, Fiancé of Nicole Boyle who was part of the Glenbeigh-Glencar team who very recently won All Ireland Junior Club medals in the Croke Park. A wonderful achievement for a small Club.

ST PATRICK'S DAY:

St Patrick's Day parades were held as usual in the local Towns and it is always a privilege to represent the parish on the viewing stands. This year I went to Castlemaine and it was good to see parishioners playing their part, representing their various clubs.

Kenmare & Dromod Union of Parishes

Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville and Valentia

Priest-in-Charge: Rev. Michael Cavanagh

St Patrick's Rectory, Kenmare, Co. Kerry.

Tel: 064 664 8566 Mob: 087 1606312

Email: michael.cavanagh@eircom.net

The World Day of Prayer service this year, jointly led by members of all three Kenmare churches, was held in Holy Cross. The theme of 'Are you being unfair to us' was chosen by the women of the Philippines, and focused on the parallels between the workers in the vineyard as described in Matthews story (Mt 20:1-16) and the workers in poorer countries of the world today. The service, held in the evening of March 3rd, ended with our Girl Guides leading the singing of 'Taps'.



Organisers of the Ecumenical World Day of Service - Jean Ritchie (Gateway Methodist), Marjorie Cavanagh (Kenmare & Dromod Union) and Celia Foley (Holy Cross Kenmare)

We were delighted to be given a private hot-off-the-press showing of the film 'The Widow's Last', this year's winner of the Bible Society's annual competition for young filmmakers to use their creativity to produce a portrayal of a Bible story in a different context, with the help of professional actors and film crew. Based on the story of Elijah and the Widow, but set in Ireland in the years of the famine, the film was made in the dramatic surroundings of Gleninchaquin Park. The crew were supported through the filming by the parish of St Patrick, who offered accommodation, equipment, some spectacular cakes and hot food – much needed given that the weather during filming exceeded even Kerry standards! The next step is the entry of the film in festivals around the world, starting this month in Los Angeles; it is planned to be on general release on completion of the festival season, probably in early 2018.

The background of the Bible Society competition can be seen on <http://www.enterthepitch.com/blog/pitch-finals-weekend/>

Methodist News

Adare & Ballingrane Methodist Circuit

Minister: Rev Ruth Watt

Methodist Manse, Rathkeale Road, Adare, Co. Limerick.

Tel: 061 396 236 Email: watt_ruth@yahoo.ie

During the past few years there has been a slowly increasing link between our Methodist churches in Adare and Ballingrane and Knock Methodist church in South Belfast. Last year for our 250th celebration of Ballingrane Methodist Church a group of people came from Knock to present pictures of stained glass windows in their church which depict the influence of Philip Embury and Barbara Heck on American Methodism (members of the Methodist community originally from Ballingrane). As we planned this we realised that we did not want this to be a one off event, but that we wanted to get to know each other and learn from our brothers and sisters in a different part of Ireland. Family who have different spiritual and material needs and opportunities from what we have here.

In February we had the opportunity to return that visit and eight of us travelled to Knock to spend time with the people there and learn from them. During our last meal together we talked about how this relationship could continue to grow and how it can benefit us all. The one thing that came strongest from that time was the importance in getting to know each other.

How needed that is - that as Christian brothers and sisters we would spend time getting to know each other, not just spending time with those from a similar cultural background and way of life, but also with those different from us. We may not be very different from those worshipping in Northern Ireland (although it seems it at times) but there is a wealth of opportunities in building relationships between those we have not known previously. This opportunity does not only have to be with those within our own church tradition, how much more can we learn from our brothers and sisters living down the road from us who belong to a different Christian tradition.

SERVICES FOR APRIL:

2nd	Rev. Ruth Watt	Holy Communion
Sat 8th	Rev. Ruth Watt	
	Saturday evening @ 8:00p.m. in Ballingrane	
Sun 9th	Rev. Ruth Watt	@ 11a.m. in Adare
Wed 12th	Rev. Ruth Watt	
Fri 14th	Rev. Ruth Watt	Good Friday
16th	Rev. Ruth Watt	Easter Sunday
23rd	Mr. Clifford Guest	Local Preachers Sunday
30th	Rev. Ruth Watt	

Unless otherwise stated services are in Adare @ 10:15am and in Ballingrane @ 11:45am

Christ Church Limerick, united Presbyterian & Methodist and Christ Church Shannon, joint Methodist, Presbyterian and Church of Ireland

Minister: Rev. Vicki Lynch
The Manse, 15 Aylesbury,
Clonmacken, Limerick.
Tel: 061 325325 Mobile: 086 8292073
Email: vickilynch@eircom.net

This month instead of writing about all the things that happened I thought it might be good to share something different. Eddie Askew was born in Nottingham, the only child of parents who were committed members of the Salvation Army. He spent much of his life working with The Leprosy Mission. He is remembered for his dry sense of humour, his Christian convictions, his art and poetry, and his practical expressions of love for those in need. In the introduction to one of his books he commented 'I thank God for imagination. He blessed us with it, it's there in our genes, but many of us let it atrophy through lack of use.' This is one of his meditations:

UNEXPECTED JOURNEYS

*It's been an interesting journey, Lord,
and one not finished yet I hope.
You've taken me in ways I've loved
to places where I've wished to stay but couldn't.
At other times you've scared me stiff
by leading me down roads I didn't want to take.
On rutted tracks that seemed to double back
and led to nowhere I could recognise,
leaving me exhausted and unsatisfied.
Sometimes I've changed direction by myself,
found myself lost and had to wait for you, bewildered.*

*You've taken me at times down lonely roads,
on unexpected journeys where you weren't there at all,
or so it seemed,
and all my shouting and my prayers
-I think they're both the same -
bounced back unanswered and I was afraid.
But punctuating all the pain, so often self-inflicted,
I've known those precious moments of transcendence.
Times when I've walked at night under the stars,
just you and me,
and looking up have felt the wonder of it all.
Have seen the light behind the darkness,
your presence in the emptiness,
lived in the paradox of kingdom here and now
and yet to come.
And through the continuity of time and love
have briefly and so richly
recognised your hand at work in me,
forming the deep desire I've felt, still feel, for you.*

Yet still you move ahead of me,

*rewarding and frustrating me by turns,
beckoning me on,
and in the dance
that's at the heart of our relationship
you weave love's footsteps into a pattern I can follow
till we reach road's end,
and in its ending find a new beginning.
All questions answered or made irrelevant
by the glory of our meeting.*



Elikya



Liturgical dancing

LIMERICK

Sunday Service 11.30am
Holy Communion 1st Sunday
Family Service 3rd Sunday
Sunday School/Youth Group 1st, 2nd & 4th Sundays
'Last Thursday' informal worship – last Thursday
each month 8pm – UL Contemplative Centre
Prayer before Sunday Service 11am Upper Room
Youth Group Monday 7.30pm
Music Group Friday evening 7.30pm
Bible Study group Wednesday 7pm Meeting Room
SHANNON & KILKEE
Contact Rev Vicki Lynch for details

Killarney, Kenmare & Millstreet Methodist Churches

[part of the Cork South & Kerry Circuit]

Minister: Rev Karen Spence
10 Flesk Grove, Killarney, Co Kerry
Tel: 064 6631613
Email: karen.spence@irishmethodist.org
Website: www.irishmethodist.org/kerry

Lay Pastoral Assistant: Suzie Gallagher
Kenmare Lay Pastoral Team: Ed and Jean Ritchie
Tel: 064 6620580

The Lighthouse MILLSTREET
Sunday service 6.30pm
Bible Study Tuesday 7.30pm
Drop in Thursday 9.30am – 12.30pm

KILLARNEY

Sunday services 9am and 11am

Prayer meetings Tuesday and Thursday 8am – 9am

Soul Food Bible Study Friday 11am followed by Drop-in lunch 12pm

Parent and Toddler (term time) Tuesday 10am

Kids Ministry Club monthly as arranged on Saturdays

The Gateway KENMARE

Sunday Service 11am (preceded by tea/coffee)

Prayer Meeting Wednesday 9.15am

Bible study Wednesday 10am

Drop in for coffee Wednesday 11am

Contact Rev Karen Spence for further information.

March has been a busy month in Kerry & Duhallow.

In Kenmare the World Day of Prayer was celebrated in Holy Cross Church with participants from the Church of Ireland, Roman Catholic and Methodist churches. Lent bible studies are continuing focussing on 'God's heart for migrants' and these are jointly led by leaders from the three churches. Another highlight was a special screening of a film 'Widow's last' which filmed on location in Kerry.

The Lighthouse in Millstreet was open as the town celebrated St Patrick's Day. Members of the congregation served tea and coffee to people passing by.

In Killarney, there was a special fun day as we celebrated St Patrick's Day. Bouncy castles, music, refreshments and a drumming circle all helped on what turned out to be a wet afternoon! A quiet space was also provided where people could pray and be prayed for.



St Patrick's Day Festivities

North Tipperary Methodist Circuit

Minister: Rev Shannon DeLaureal

The Manse, The Mall, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary

Tel: 0505 21670 Mobile: 085 1920 808

Email: Shannon.delaureal@irishmethodist.org

SUNDAY SERVICES:

10:00am – Borrisokane

11:30am – Cloughjordan on 1st & 2nd Sunday's

10:15am – Cloughjordan on 3rd, 4th, & 5th Sunday's

11:45am – Roscrea

7:00pm – Shinrone

In February, our Boys' Brigade had a wonderful Friday evening visit from the RSPCA, Roscrea Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. They brought two dogs and one kitten to show the boys. Both dogs currently were in good homes but the representatives spoke about how both had been rescued after they had been abandoned. Our group was very interested to learn about the various animals that had been rescued over the years ... most were pets (dogs, cats, donkeys and horses) while there were some wild animals rescued too, such as a swan and fox. Our company made a monetary and pet food donation to help in this important ministry to animals. Overall, we had a most enjoyable night learning about the importance of taking care of our pets and the possibility of fostering or adopting rescued ones.

In early March, we celebrated and gave thanks to God for the wedding of Sharon Hendy and Noel Lane. They married in Cloughjordan Methodist Church on a sunny Thursday 9th March 2017. Fr. Michael Harding, from St Cronan's Catholic Church, assisted in the wedding as he is a family friend of the Lane family. We pray many blessings for Sharon and Noel as they share life as husband and wife.



Sharon and Noel with Fr Michael and Rev Shannon

In April, we look forward to journeying through Holy Week and Easter Sunday where we will remember our Lord's Passion and celebrate his Resurrection. We invite you to join us at any of our worship services:
Wednesday 12 April at 8pm: Prayers for healing in Borrisokane Church
Thursday 13 April at 8pm: Maundy Thursday Service in Cloughjordan Col with Holy Communion
Friday 14 April at 8pm: Contemplative Good Friday Service in Shinrone Church
Sunday 16 April- Easter Sunday Celebrations: 10am Borrisokane, 10:15am Cloughjordan, 11:45 Roscrea, 7pm .

We wish you and yours a hope-filled and joyful Easter.

Faithfully,
Rev. Shannon

Bible Bite

A short story from the Bible

It can be read in the Bible in
Mt 21:1-11, Mk 11:1-11, Lk 19:28-38, Jn 12:12-19

Thousands of people went to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover feast each year. This year Jesus and his friends went too.

Two miles outside Jerusalem Jesus said to two of his friends



Go into that village and bring back the donkey you find there.

If anyone asks, say 'The Lord needs it.'



So off they went...

and they found it as Jesus had said



Why are you taking our donkey?

The Lord needs it.



That's alright then

They brought it back to Jesus, and made a saddle from a cloak.



They spread more cloaks on the road to make it a way fit for a king.



Others cut palm branches and waved them.

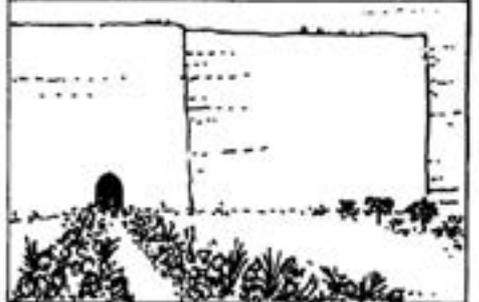


They shouted the traditional welcome to the Passover feast

God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord!



As they got closer to Jerusalem the crowd grew.



Everyone shouted to welcome Jesus as king



The teachers of the laws were angry



Teacher, you should stop them calling you 'king'.

But Jesus replied



What they say is so true that even if I made them stop, the stones would shout!

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Scholarships

Four Academic Scholarships, currently €1,000 per year, are awarded based on the results of the scholarships exams set each May for students entering Form I. These are awarded to the best Day Girl, Day Boy, Boarding Girl and Boarding Boy.

Prompt Payment Draw

All families who pay before a specified date each semester are entered into a draw for a refund of their net fees for that semester. Please contact our School Bursar for specific information on all our grants, scholarships and bursaries. All enquiries are dealt with in the strictest of confidence - bursar@villiers-school.com

Weekend bus service - Killaloe, Ballina, Nenagh, Borrisokane, Birr, Roscrea.



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